ANUARY 5, 2004

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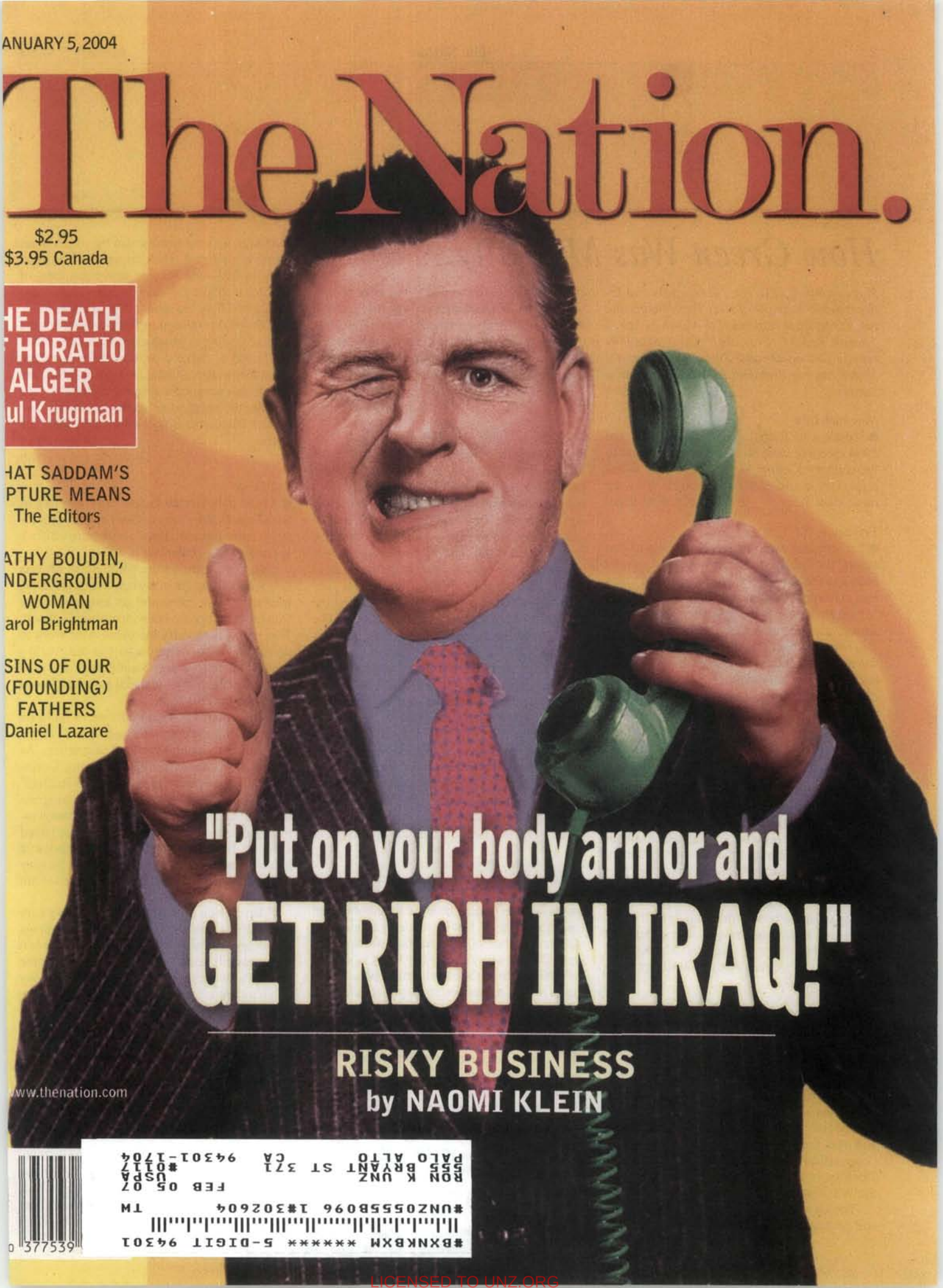

"Put on your body armor and
GET RICH IN IRAQ!"

RISKY BUSINESS
by NAOMI KLEIN

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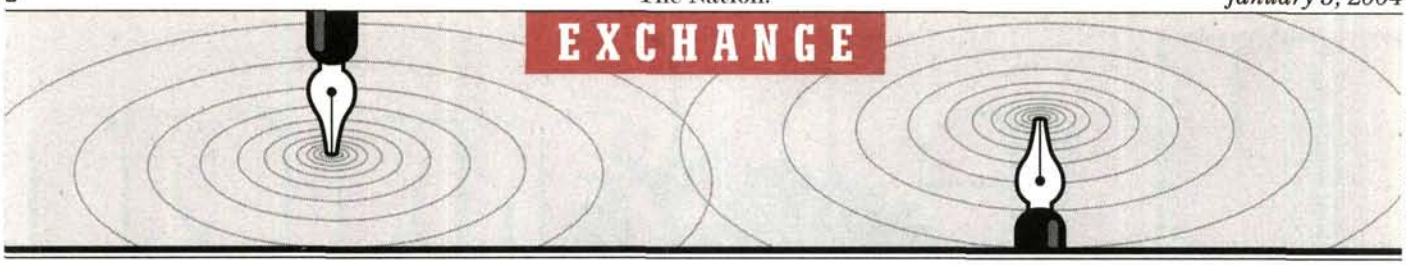

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

How Green Was My Tally...

Huge numbers of Greens, Democrats and Independents, a couple of stray Republicans and one Libertarian responded to Micah L. Sifry's "Ralph Redux" [Nov. 24], about reactions among Democrats and Greens to a potential Nader run for President in 2004. Herewith a sample. —*The Editors*

New York City

■ Message to Ralph Nader: *Stay out* of the 2004 election. Despite your foolish rhetoric to the contrary, George W. is a helluva lot worse than Gore could *ever* have been. Don't even *think* about it! MURTON EDELSTEIN

Princeton, NJ

■ I'm dubious about Micah Sifry's claim that among the Greens "a distinct minority...backs Nader as the party's best spokesman and wants him to run an unconditional national campaign." My sense is exactly the opposite. Here in New Jersey, at a meeting held specifically to address this issue, an overwhelming majority voted to run a strong national campaign in 2004 with a high-visibility candidate. The preferred candidate: Ralph Nader. STEVE WELZER
State coordinator
Green Party of New Jersey

New York City

■ One looks in vain in Micah Sifry's article for any statement of what Democrats might do to gain cooperation from Greens; instead, only anxious pleas among Greens to accommodate the Democratic nominee. Sifry nonetheless concludes that, "as long as the two-party duopoly misrules America, third-party efforts will percolate and independent voters will proliferate." One might add that such misrule will continue so long as parties outside the duopoly hold themselves and their voters responsible rather than those within it. RONALD MACKINNON
Green Party of New York State

Detroit

■ Here's a news flash. If you're depending on the Democrats to defend us from Bush's policies, you have no defense. They did not oppose the war in Iraq and they did not expose the vicious right-wing agenda hidden behind Bush's "war on terror." And they are just as corporate-dominated as the Republicans. Look at the past twenty-five years: The Republicans are elected and push things to the right; the Democrats (in "opposition") move almost as far right; the Democrats are elected and we get NAFTA, the WTO and a vicious attack on welfare.

The Greens should run a strong candidate and get support from progressives everywhere. If we decide not to run due to the wave of hysteria that has been whipped up against us, it will be a setback for progressive politics. If the 2004 election proceeds without a strong progressive voice, this country will continue to move to the right no matter which major party wins.

PAUL FELTON, *co-chair*
Detroit Green Party

Burlingame, Calif.

■ All that discussion on what the Greens are up to and what they are thinking—what about the Democrats? What are *they* up to, besides blaming their inadequacies on the Greens? How about they take a look at their own act? Democrats backed the war, the tax cut for the wealthy, the Patriot Act, the gutting of our social programs and are taking part in the movement toward fascism in our nation. Democrats support the GOP foreign policy that is causing the international community serious concern. The Democrats don't seem to know that the oil is running out, the climate is warming and the environmental systems of the planet are under terrible stress. Democrats and *The Nation* need to give attention to the Democratic Party and its position on the issues listed above.

We in the Bay Area know that the Democrats are scared of the Greens—Demo fat cats spent millions to beat Matt Gonzalez's run for mayor of San Francisco. Democrats: Look in the mirror and stop attacking Greens. Greens *and* Democrats want to get rid of Bush. PAT GRAY
Green candidate for Congress

New Haven, Conn.

■ Micah Sifry is correct that running a Green presidential candidate risks alienating the potential support Greens need for their bottom-up electoral strategy. But he neglects to mention why the Greens feel that a national run is necessary. The only way the Green Party is able to get attention from the establishment progressive media is in its role as potential spoiler. Although the Greens have been making contributions to local politics—in many instances beating corrupt machine Democrats, so that even a skeptic like Norman Solomon admits that Greens "have bettered many communities"—they have been ignored by the media.

The reaction from the progressive media to Nader's 2000 run ranged from a few instances of tepid support to intense hostility. Even so, the Greens made significant gains on the local level following the 2000 election. There is, therefore, reason to believe that much of the Greens' potential support does not come from readers of *The Nation*, *The Progressive* or *Z*. Nader's campaign was the mechanism by which these formerly alienated voters discovered the Green Party in 2000 and became active members of their local chapters. It may be that a Nader candidacy will have the same effect in 2004.

While I do not support that position, it is the logic according to which many Greens feel they are forced to make a presidential run, taking down themselves and the Democrats' nominee. Should this worst-case scenario materialize, the Greens, the progressive media, including *The Nation*, Nader and Sifry himself will share the blame. JOHN HALLE
Green Party alderman

San Diego

■ As the only elected Green Party member in San Diego County (city of San Diego's community planning board), I agree with Micah Sifry's opposition to a Nader run in 2004.

While the hero on the white horse bit was fine for 2000 and got many new voters involved, we must evolve, grow and get tough, not only with those we oppose but with ourselves as well. This year Green Party members must work to defeat an Administration that is the world's greatest threat to peace, social justice and ecological sustainability—and that means no Green candidate for President.

In addition, we must continue to build on our expanding strength in tying the party's ten core values to local issues and campaigns. As treasurer of the Affordable Housing Coalition and as executive director of the Renters' Union, I need to build coalitions with progressives and Democrats in this citadel of conservatism and corporate-bought government. I need allies to fight for tenants' rights, affordable housing and a just wage, and that will be very difficult to do as a Green if we do not unite with Democrats.

I have given up a run for San Diego's City Council this year to do exactly the two things Sifry suggests: work to defeat Bush and the evil he represents and concentrate on making the Green Party a source of change and hope in my neighborhood. I have gotten ahold of my ego, for the Green Party's sake and on behalf of my community. I don't see why Ralph can't do the same. ROCKY NEPTUN

Seattle

■ Micah Sifry is absolutely right in characterizing the conflict between the Green Party and the Democrats as a "death struggle"—one from which we'll all suffer if the Dems don't get a clue. I'm a Green who voted for Nader in 2000, and I regret absolutely nothing. I can't tell you how many of my Democratic friends continue, three years later, to attack me and blame Nader

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EDITORIALS

Saddam's Inglorious End

"The enemies of a free Iraq have lost their leader," said George Bush following the capture of Saddam Hussein. To many people's eyes, the lone derelict crouching in a six-foot-deep "spider hole" hardly seemed the mastermind of the insurrection. Yes, his capture is good news for the Iraqi people. Their ex-dictator can now be held to account for the fearful crimes and atrocities that pocked his reign—hanging innocent Jews in Baghdad in 1969; ordering a third of Baath Party officials shot in 1979; invading Iran and decimating a generation of young men; gassing the Kurds in 1988; massacring Shiites and marsh Arabs after the first Gulf War; ceaseless arbitrary arrests and executions.

That said, Bush's incipient triumphalism seems an attempt to inflate the arrest of Saddam into a justification for his illegal war. Saddam's capture does nothing to justify the war, said Senator Robert Byrd in a speech (full text at www.thenation.com) at the December 14 Nation Institute dinner: "As each day passes and as more American soldiers are killed and wounded in Iraq, I become ever more convinced that the war in Iraq was the wrong war at the wrong time in the wrong place for the wrong reasons." Bush used his press conference to announce his run for re-election and tout his "extraordinary year" of achievements. He got a temporary boost in popularity out of the capture, and his political strategists are already devising ways to put Democratic critics of the war on the defensive. But neither Howard Dean, who warned that Saddam's arrest "has not made America safer" (polls say 60 percent agree), nor Dennis Kucinich, who called for ending the occupation and bringing in the UN, was intimidated by slams from the Administration, other Democrats or the punditocracy.

Even the ebullient Bush felt constrained to warn that the fighting in Iraq will not soon be over. (In the twenty-four hours after Saddam's arrest, at least twenty-six Iraqi police and civilians were killed by car bombs.) Nor will the arrest of Saddam hasten the capture of Osama bin Laden or eliminate a single Al Qaeda cell.

Meanwhile, in Iraq, Reuters reported that "joy at the capture of Saddam Hussein gave way to resentment toward Washington... as Iraqis confronted afresh the bloodshed, shortages and soaring prices of life under US occupation." The *Washington Post* noted that "in the towns and villages to the north and west of the capital, where anger at the occupation is most intense, Hussein's arrest may have little impact on the insurgency."

At most, the former dictator was a rallying symbol for a restoration, but that prospect instilled dread in the hearts of most Iraqis, who had come to loathe him. Many Iraqis, Sunnis as well as Shiites, may actually feel emboldened to resist US troops now that Saddam has no chance of coming back. As for the Islamists coming in from other countries, they were never fond of Saddam.

Although US military spokesmen play down the attacks as "strategically insignificant," their continuation seriously hampers Iraq's reconstruction, undermines GI morale and sways a growing body of Iraqis to blame America for their troubles.

A cheerleading media bought into the triumphalist Bush scenario. On CNN Judy Woodruff asked, "What are the issues left to talk about regarding Iraq?" Well, ending the occupation, for one. The need to seize this moment to internationalize the transition to a sovereign Iraq is ever more pressing, although it seems unlikely. There was speculation that the Administration would use ex–Secretary of State Jim Baker's debt-moratorium sales mission to

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smooth ruffled feathers in France, Russia and Germany, angry over being blacklisted for Iraq reconstruction contracts. Warmed by the news of Saddam's capture, all sides should face-savingly drop past quarrels and contribute to rebuilding Iraq. Some debt reduction is likely, but we doubt this Administration will engage in the serious diplomacy required to eliminate the residue of bad feelings left by its punitive unilateralism. Germany, for example, had an agreement with Washington that it would bolster its troop strength in Afghanistan while staying out of Iraq. The Administration still put it on the blacklist.

There are other issues in Iraq: Will US troops, Iraqi security forces and aid workers continue to be killed or attacked on an almost daily basis? Will Bremer & Co. solve the shortages of power, food, drinking water, housing and jobs? What about the tactics used by US forces—bombing, demolitions, assassinations, nightly raids—that are alienating Iraqis? What form should a free and independent Iraqi government take? What about the oppression of women? How to repair the damage Bush's interventionism has done to the US constitutional balance of powers? Byrd observed, "Congress allowed the Constitution to become a casualty of the Bush doctrine of pre-emptive strikes.... Congress delegated its constitutional authority [to declare war] to the President and effectively washed its hands of the fate of Iraq."

Then there is the growing stain of scandal around Iraq's reconstruction. Stories about Halliburton's profiteering on gasoline were bumped from the front pages by Saddam's capture. There must be more such exposés (see Naomi Klein on page 11).

We hope that the trial of Saddam Hussein will be fairly conducted and enable Iraqis to purge their dark past. For Americans the trial should provide some lessons: Neither the overthrow of the Baathist regime nor Saddam's capture can erase the fact that Washington (and other Western powers) helped prop up Saddam for years. It will be said that such things matter little now that the dictator is in custody. Such a view suits our ethos, our indifference to history; it is also the privilege of the victor to wipe the slate clean and forget the past—but that is a luxury we can ill afford. The rise of Saddam Hussein is as much a part of US history as is his fall.

The New Money Game

Now that the Supreme Court has upheld the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA), better known as the McCain-Feingold law, by a 5-to-4 majority, is the need for campaign finance reform over? A surprising number of people seem to think so. First there are members of Congress, who are said to be experiencing "reform fatigue," overwhelmed by the technicalities of the law they passed (the joke in the cloakrooms is that BCRA stands for "Before Campaigning, Retain an Attorney"). Then there are the cynics in the press who have been saying all along that campaign reform can't work. Now they point to the recent emergence of independent committees, known as Section 527 organizations after the relevant part of the IRS tax code, as proving their point. These committees are funded with soft money from wealthy donors like philanthropist George Soros. And finally there are progressives who have begun wondering aloud whether

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EDITORIALS

more reform is needed if big donors like Soros will pay to level the playing field while Howard Dean's small-donor dynamo reinvents public financing through the generosity of private givers.

All these people are wrong. First of all, Congress cannot and should not stop now. All BCRA does is end the raising and spending of unlimited soft-money donations by federal party committees and candidates running for federal office and constrain the financing of some ads aimed at helping or hurting candidates. These were big loopholes through which about $500 million from corporations, unions and rich individuals flowed in the last presidential election cycle, out of a total of $2.9 billion. But now Congress ought to deal with the fact that the remaining system of financing campaigns is grossly unfair and unrepresentative. Just one-quarter of 1 percent of Americans make a campaign contribution of $200 or more, and this group is disproportionately white, wealthy, male and conservative. Ninety percent of the more than $2 billion contributed by individuals to federal candidates and parties in the 2000 and 2002 elections came from ZIP codes that are predominantly non-Hispanic white, even though nearly a third of Americans are of color, according a new report, "Color of Money 2003" by Public Campaign, the Fannie Lou Hamer Project and the William C. Velasquez Institute (see Patricia J. Williams, page 10, for more details). Our attention ought to be on addressing that fundamental divide, wherein an adult resident of Beverly Hills 90210 gives, on average, $466 in campaign contributions while the average adult resident of Compton 90221 gives just 60 cents.

As for the notion that reform is for naught because wealthy interests are already finding new loopholes—when has this not been the case? Politics in America has always been a conflict between organized money and organized people. To be sure, BCRA will reduce some of the most obscene corruption, because some vested interests will decide that giving a big check to a Section 527 group is a far less certain method of buying access to politicians than the now-banned method of giving soft money directly to party legislative leaders. And some big money will flow into 527s, as is already starting to happen, with troubling results—like the hard-hitting ads attacking Dean by a shadowy group calling itself Americans for Jobs, Health Care and Progressive Values. Congress should insist on more timely disclosure of who is funding these groups, but their existence does not mean ipso facto that reform has failed.

Finally, for those progressives who think the rise of altruistic sugar daddies like Soros and of Dean's legions of small donors may insure a fair fight next fall against George W. Bush's quarter-billion bankroll, we offer these cautions: Every time liberals have found a new way to focus their money, the innovation has been ruthlessly exploited by the other side. Soros's giving is stimulating Republican fundraising. Indeed, Bush's campaign recently sent out an end-of-the-year e-mail appeal laughably called "Grassroots vs. Liberal Billionaires." When wealth is so unevenly distributed, average folks can never win the money game—in fact, they can't even win it temporarily without selling out their principles. And it's far from clear that the Dean model can be replicated in other races, especially those lower on the ballot, where the pressure to raise money is greater than ever. We still have to change the rules of politics so that organizing people matters more than organizing money, by offering candidates who demonstrate a broad base of voter support with full public financing of their campaigns. Call it democratizing the process if you suffer from "reform fatigue." Just don't call it over.

COMMENT

Blue States, Latino Voters

ELECTION MATTERS

For almost forty years now, the white South has been moving steadily into the Republican ranks. Indeed, white Southerners now run the GOP and provide a very high proportion of its cultural shock troops. Given these facts, we believe it's past time to target the electoral map in a different way. The new path to the White House runs through the Latino Southwest, not the former Confederacy, especially for a Northern nominee. Hope blooms as a cactus flower, not a magnolia blossom.

We say this although we fully agree with the recent argument made by our friends Jesse Jackson Jr. and Frank Watkins that a strategy based on economic issues is critical for uniting African-American and white voters—and, we would add, Latino voters—over the long term. There is no doubt that Southern whites have been victimized by conservative bait-and-switch tactics—losing ground on jobs, wages, healthcare and retirement security while being polarized on racial issues and diverted on cultural issues (and, of course, when Southern whites are diverted, Southern blacks pay the heaviest price). Outside Florida, though, there is very little chance that enough Southern whites can be convinced of this logic to carry any Confederate electoral votes next year.

Consider this simple point by analyst Charlie Cook in *The Almanac of American Politics 2002* concerning the swing suburban vote in the 2000 election: "Importantly, Bush's scant two-point victory in suburbs this year was driven by carrying Southern suburbs by 20 points, while losing non-Southern suburbs by about 15 points." Now balance that comment against Bush pollster Matthew Dowd's revealing insight that if the Bush 2004 percentage remains the same with every ethnic group he won in 2000, then the Democrats could win by 3 million votes rather than half a million. Most of this increase would come from Latinos.

Where do these Latinos live? More to the point for the next presidential election, where do these Latinos live that makes a potential difference in the Electoral College? They live in four key states in the desert Southwest with huge and growing Latino populations. In 2004 these four states combined will cast twenty-nine electoral votes, four more than in 2000 and more than Florida casts. And Latino voters in these four states could be united and inspired by an economic agenda that includes decent wages, retirement security, reining in corporate corruption, rebuilding public schools, labor rights and healthcare.

§ New Mexico was a blue state surrounded by red in 2000. The race was essentially a dead heat. New Mexico now has aggressive Latino Democratic Governor Bill Richardson, who is mobilizing hard to increase the power of the Latino vote nationwide.

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COMMENT

§ Nevada, where Al Gore fell short of the White House by less than 22,000 votes out of more than 600,000 cast, essentially doubled its Latino share of the population in only ten years. (In 1990, Nevada was 10.4 percent Latino; by 2000, 19.7 percent.) And since then, George W. Bush has signed off on the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump. Las Vegas also has a strong labor movement.

§ Arizona, which Bill Clinton won in 1996 and Al Gore lost by less than 100,000 votes (out of more than 1.5 million cast), now has a woman Democratic governor. Arizona is already one-quarter Latino, and according to the census, of the more than 325,000 people added to the state between April 2000 and July 2002 (the latest estimate), more than half (181,000) were Latinos.

§ Colorado is a state that Bill Clinton carried in 1992 and lost by only 20,000 votes in 1996. Although Bush won the state by 9 percentage points in 2000, his winning percentage was only 51 percent, and his environmental sins combined with a growing Latino vote could make this state much closer next time.

Then there is the secret weapon—non-Cuban Latinos in Florida. The Sunshine State is now 17 percent Latino, and with each passing day the conservative Cuban-American vote loses market share while the more progressive non–Cuban-American Latino vote grows by leaps and bounds. Cuban-Americans took credit for delivering Florida to Bush in 2000, giving him 80–85 percent of their vote. Given their deep-seated hatred of Castro and their loyalty to Governor Jeb Bush, this percentage is unlikely to change much in 2004 (though young Cuban-Americans are much less fixated on Castro than their elders). What is overlooked, though, is that non–Cuban-American Latinos voted heavily for Al Gore—actually, combined with the huge African-American turnout in 2000, Latinos won Florida for Gore! Most Cuban-Americans are already registered to vote, but thousands and thousands of non–Cuban-American Latinos are not, a fact the Southwest Voter Registration and Education Project has wisely recognized.

Finally, when considering the Latino vote, reflect on this potentially empowering statistic: There are as many unregistered Latinos who are American citizens as there were Latino voters in 2000—more than 5.5 million. These potential voters are not likely Bush voters, despite Republican rhetoric; they cry out for mobilization, for registration, for contact on issues they care about, for GOTV (get out the vote).

The 2000 election left us with a map split between blue states and red states. The conventional wisdom is that a Northern nominee, to win, will have to find a way to convert some of the old Confederate gray from red to blue. But most Southern states are burial grounds for Northern Democrats, not battlegrounds. Redefeating George W. Bush in 2004 hinges on holding blue states on both coasts, making gains in the Midwest from West Virginia through Ohio to Missouri and adding New Hampshire—and registering and mobilizing massive numbers of Latino voters in the Southwest and Florida.

Mobilizing the fast-rising Southwestern Latino population around the same progressive economic issues that can also unite poor whites and African-Americans is the ticket to ride in 2004. Even better, given the explosive growth rates for Latinos in the Old South—not just in Texas and Florida but also in states like Georgia and North Carolina—adding these new Latino votes to the strong existing African-American base there will transform American politics. As the Rev. Jesse Jackson often says, the hands that picked the cotton, plus the hands that picked the lettuce, are the hands that can pick the next President—for years to come.

JOE VELASQUEZ AND STEVE COBBLE

Joe Velasquez, former White House deputy political director and longtime union organizer, directs Moving America Forward, a 527 organization dedicated to registering and mobilizing Latinos. Former New Mexican Steve Cobble, who worked with Jesse Jackson as political director for the National Rainbow Coalition, serves as strategic adviser to the Kucinich campaign. The opinions expressed are their own.

CALVIN TRILLIN

MEMO

To: Commander, Coalition Forces
From: Karl Rove, Supreme Commander

I now repeat the order that I gave
(And please don't ask again if I am sober):
Replace Saddam Hussein from whence he came,
And capture him again in late October.

Trouble in Prozac Nation

The possibility that a group of widely prescribed antidepressants, including Prozac and Paxil, might trigger suicide and other violence in a small percentage of users has been the subject of isolated reports in the major media since they first arrived on the market. Recently, however, the concern has been recognized by the federal government. In June, following actions taken by British drug authorities, the FDA released a statement recommending that physicians refrain from prescribing Paxil to new patients under 18.

Paxil is one of a class of drugs known as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). Studies funded by the drug's maker, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), showed it was no more effective than placebos for treating pediatric depression. The same studies also showed an increased occurrence of emotional disturbance in those taking it. The likelihood of a suicide attempt, for example, was about three times greater for Paxil users than for those taking placebos. In August, Wyeth pharmaceuticals drew essentially the same conclusions about its antidepressant Effexor, sending out a two-page letter to healthcare workers stating it may not be safe for pediatric use. This led to the FDA's reanalyzing data for Effexor and several other SSRIs, and in October the FDA issued an advisory citing similar findings for Celexa, Effexor, Prozac and Zoloft. In December drug authorities in Britain banned all but one

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COMMENT

SSRI from use by children because of evidence that they can cause children to become suicidal. The consistency of these findings suggests that perhaps the FDA should be taking actions that should have been taken long ago to curb adult use of SSRIs.

Reports of a possible link between adult SSRI use and violence, including suicide, first appeared in 1990. In 1991, however, the FDA made a finding, based on a highly selective set of data put together by Eli Lilly scientists, which concluded that Prozac did not cause suicide and was safe. Since that time, SSRI makers have dismissed all allegations that the drugs cause violence and suicide by citing the FDA's report—a report that now looks especially dubious in light of concerns over giving these drugs to children.

Meanwhile, incidents of extreme mental agitation involving SSRIs have not abated. In May 2001, for example, Australian David Hawkins strangled his wife and then attempted to kill himself after taking an overdose of Zoloft. In a similar case, a jury found that Paxil caused 60-year-old Donald Schell to shoot to death his wife, his adult daughter, his infant granddaughter and himself. He had been taking the SSRI for only two days and, like Hawkins, he had no history of violence of any kind.

These and other civil actions have given plaintiffs' lawyers access to private company archives, where they have found a variety of unpublished studies, including many from the 1980s, confirming a link between SSRIs, agitation and violence. In one study conducted by Pfizer in the 1980s, many healthy female volunteers given either Zoloft or a placebo began complaining of problems of agitation and apprehension. Twenty-five percent of individuals—all GSK employees—experienced agitation after taking Paxil.

Instead of at least warning physicians of a risk of drug-induced agitation, SSRI makers continue to insist that the violence linked to SSRI use is the product of the "illness" the drug is said to treat. In many instances of SSRI-related violence, however, the drugs were prescribed not for clinical depression but only as an adjunct treatment for other health problems (such as back pain). Diane Cassidy, for example, was prescribed Prozac not for depression but for "off label" use as a weight-loss drug. Today, as a result, she is paralyzed on one side of her body and suffers from significant cognitive impairment.

SSRI makers, it seems, have embraced the well-tested tobacco-company tactic of denial, denial, denial. All that they have conceded to date is that whatever serious side-effects might occur in some small percentage of SSRI users, millions of others have been helped by them. But even this concession is misleading. The real question is whether SSRIs are better than non-SSRI antidepressants, including those they have come to replace, namely, tricyclics like Tofranil and Elavil. SSRIs have not been clinically proven to be more effective or safer than these older, less expensive antidepressants. Although tricyclics do have greater toxicity when taken in overdose, they do not pose the risk of severe mental agitation and violence seen with SSRIs, nor do they cause withdrawal symptoms or lowered libido.

What has become clear is that the SSRIs should not be the first line of pharmacological treatment for depression. As the *London Times* reported on October 20, the overprescribing of antidepressants has grown to alarming proportions since the dawn of Prozac, and as British drug authorities recently concluded, physicians should not be prescribing antidepressants for "normal problems of life." Yes, billions of dollars in revenue are at stake in the selling of SSRIs. Zoloft, Paxil and Prozac collectively brought in more than $6 billion in gross sales in 2002. That may explain the failure of the FDA to act, but it certainly cannot justify it when the public's health is at stake.

RICHARD DEGRANDPRE

Richard DeGrandpre is the author of Ritalin Nation *(Norton), as well as the investigative report "The Lilly Suicides," available at http://prozacspotlight.org/lilly.*

In Fact . . .

NEW YORK GETS COLD FEET

■ Ben Adler writes: The New York City Council passed up an opportunity to send a birthday present to the Bill of Rights on December 15, 2003, the 212th anniversary of its ratification. Resolution 909, a measure to defend the Bill of Rights against the USA Patriot Act, was scheduled to come to a vote and was expected to pass, but City Council Speaker Gifford Miller held off on bringing the bill before the full council because, his office says, he didn't want to take attention away from Saddam Hussein's recent capture. New York City would have become the 229th locality, and the largest, to pass a resolution condemning the Patriot Act. Donna Lieberman, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, has been spearheading the campaign to pass Resolution 909. She said Resolution 909 "has nothing to do with the capture of Saddam...actually one could argue that there is all the more reason to pass it today because we have to reaffirm our respect for individual liberty as we protect our country." Miller promised to bring the bill to a vote in the next term, on January 21.

OUR 138TH-BIRTHDAY BASH

■ Conveyed by Amtrak through the blizzard, Senator Robert Byrd made it to the December 14 Nation Institute dinner in New York City in time for the war's most eloquent opponent to provide his view on Saddam Hussein's capture. His talk was the highlight of an evening sparked—like the magazine—by spirit and controversy. Another high point: the presentation of the $100,000 Puffin/*Nation* Prize for Creative Citizenship by donor Perry Rosenstein. Accepting for David Protess, founder of the Innocence Project at Northwestern's Medill journalism school, was his former student Pam Cytrynbaum, who helped win the release of a Louisiana prisoner sentenced to life. An emotional moment came when another man freed by Protess's protégés after seventeen years on death row—Aaron Patterson, now a candidate for the Illinois State Legislature—made a cameo appearance.

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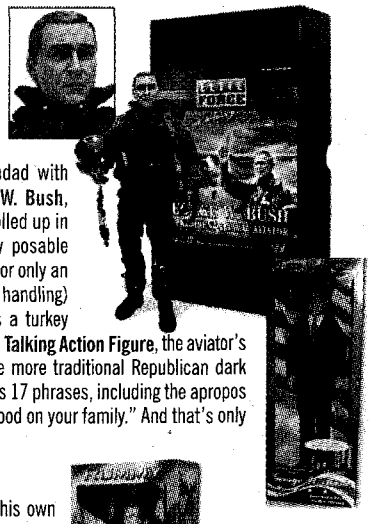
COMMENT

Have Yourself a Pentagon Xmas

by Nicholas Turse

'Twas the night before Christmas
And all through the house
The Special Forces team was inserted
As quiet as a mouse.

If you want to "wow" the kids this Yuletide, here are some "Hot as Depleted Uranium Toys for a New Imperial Age" that will make their eyes gleam.

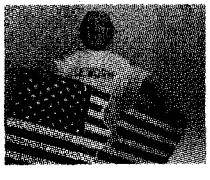


What would the holidays be without little muscularized molded-plastic dolls holding big guns in a kung-fu battle grip? Now, thanks to Blue Box International, your child can pilot Air Force One into Baghdad with **Elite Force Aviator: George W. Bush**, the greatest American hero, dolled up in naval aviator regalia—a fully posable 12" action figure in "g-pants." For only an extra $29.95 (plus shipping and handling) your child can feed the troops a turkey dinner using the **George W. Bush Talking Action Figure**, the aviator's civilian counterpart, clad in the more traditional Republican dark suit and red power tie. He spouts 17 phrases, including the apropos Bushism "working hard to put food on your family." And that's only the beginning!

Just imagine your son holding his own news conference with the **Donald Rumsfeld Talking Action Figure** ($29.99 plus shipping and handling). Press his button and catch 28 different phrases, including the classic: "I believe what I said yesterday. I don't know what I said. But I know what I think. I assume that's what I said."

Little Heroes need Villains, of course. For a modest $39.95 get 'em the **Talking DOA Uday**, a dual-headed action figure of Saddam Hussein's son that speaks the words, in a genuine faux–Middle Eastern accent, "Someone must help me. I…I am still alive, only I am very badly burned."

Or how about **Babbling Osama the Dirty Terrorist**? "Get your very own talking terrorist.... Listen to him babble his terrorist nonsense," says manufacturer Hero Builders, which also cautions, "Don't be fooled by other cheap imitations not made by Americans."



Sacre bleu! Direct from Gay Paree, here comes **Talking Le Worm**, an action figure that bears a striking (but surely coincidental) resemblance to Jacques Chirac. A perfect gift for every child who holds a grudge against America's true enemy: France! Tell the French exactly what you think of them for just $35.95!

Parents of the older child should forsake sheer jingoistic fun for something more educational. In recent years, the Defense Department has been hard at work with Silicon Valley's videogame makers and Hollywood's special-effects wizards on games guaranteed to improve your child's hand-eye coordination and urban combat skills. A few possibilities:

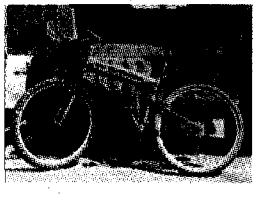
America's Army—revamped, heavy on military training, with genuine combat scenarios in absolutely foreign settings—Mogadishu! Mombasa! Kandahar! And best of all, the US Army offers it online for free.

Full-Spectrum Warrior: The season's top Microsoft videogame, based on an Army combat simulator created by the Institute for Creative Technologies (a $45 million joint Army/University of Southern California venture). Full-spectrum military training and full-throttle entertainment!

Read the book, play the game, destroy the world! Tom Clancy's **Rainbow Six 3: Raven Shield**—The #1 videogame choice of Dr. Beth Redden, chief of the Army Research Lab's Human Research Engineering Directorate field element, for testing soldiers' "collaborative situational awareness."

Is your child a cable news addict? Stuck on fair 'n' balanced Fox instead of doing her homework? **Kuma War** saves the day, merging "introductions" from cable-news-style anchors, real combat footage *and* the ability to re-enact her favorite military missions of the recent past—like the assassination of Saddam Hussein's sons! A game truly in the spirit of the season!

Can't afford a Hummer? Why not put a piece of "desert stealth mobility" under the Christmas tree instead? Try **The Paratrooper**, a—count 'em—24-speed mountain bike developed by Montague Corporation in conjunction with the famous Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). This bike is sure to be a hit with your little armchair commando.



He sprang to his Abrams, to his tank crew gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like a Tomahawk missile…

Nicholas Turse is a doctoral student in public health at Columbia University. For a longer version of this piece with links to the various "toys," visit www.tomdispatch.com, Tom Engelhardt's Nation Institute weblog. This is the first of a series of articles jointly commissioned by Tomdispatch and The Nation.

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

How to Kill Saddam

The last time I saw pictures of a man in need of a haircut being displayed as a trophy of the American Empire it was Che Guevara, stretched out dead on a table in Vallegrande, a village in the Bolivian mountains. In those edgier days, in late 1967, the Bolivian Army high command wanted him dead, the quicker the better, though the CIA wanted him alive for interrogation in Panama.

After a last chat with the CIA's Felix Rodriguez, George Bush Sr.'s pal of Iran/*contra* notoriety, a Bolivian sergeant called Mario Terán shot Che in the throat, and Rodriguez got to keep his watch. They chopped off Guevara's hands for checking, to make sure the ID was correct. Years later, his skeleton, sans hands, was located and flown back to Havana for proper burial.

"It is better like this," Guevara told Rodriguez at the end. "I never should have been captured alive," showing that even the bravest weaken at times. At the moment of his capture, a wounded Guevara had identified himself, telling the Bolivian soldiers he was Che and worth more to them alive than dead.

Back in 1967 most of the world mourned when Che's capture and death seized the headlines. A million turned out in Havana to listen to Fidel Castro's farewell speech. It's been downhill ever since. The revolutionary cause has mostly gone to hell in a handcart, and the next time America's Most Wanted came out with his hands up, badly in need of a haircut, it was a mass murderer called Saddam Hussein, helped into power by the CIA a year after Guevara's death. "I'm the president of Iraq," he said, and then tried to cut a deal.

I went straight from Monday morning news clips of the US Army's film of Saddam having his teeth checked to have my own teeth cleaned by Tom, an oral hygienist in Santa Rosa, Northern California. To try to deflect Tom from his stern rebukes for my own flossing failures, I mentioned the footage of Saddam. Though he gave no professional opinions on the state of Saddam's gums, it turned out Tom had spent a couple of years in Basra in southern Iraq imparting the elements of oral hygiene to the locals. "I'd point out to them that their gums were bleeding, and they'd sigh and say it was Allah's will." Then, like millions round the world, we (though, of necessity, I did most of the listening) reviewed the various options awaiting Saddam.

There were plenty of pieties in the opinion columns that morning about the need for a manifestly independent tribunal where Saddam could be accorded every legal courtesy and the administration of justice would be scrupulous.

It was impossible to read this claptrap without laughing, since that same morning Wesley Clark was testifying in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), a body conjured into existence by the UN Security Council. As being anything other than a US puppet, ICTY was looking pretty slutty that morning, since Washington had successfully bullied the court into allowing Clark to testify in the absence of public or press, in what the ICTY demurely termed a "temporary closed session," with delayed transmission of the transcript, to allow the US government to "review the transcript and make representations as to whether evidence given in open session [*sic*] should be redacted in order to protect the national interests of the US." Further to protect the interests of General Clark, he would only have to endure tightly circumscribed cross-examination by Milosevic, a feisty inquisitor.

All the United States wants is for Saddam to be hauled into some kangaroo court and, after a brisk procedure, in which Saddam will no doubt be denied opportunities to interrogate old pals from happier days, like Donald Rumsfeld, be dropped through a trapdoor with a rope tied round his neck, maybe with an Iraqi, or at least a son of the Prophet, pulling the lever.

These pretenses at judicial propriety are absurd. I prefer the posture of the Arab-American woman who said Saddam should be put in a cage and drowned with spit. If it's a demonstration of power we're after, let's go to the history books and check on an execution in 1571 that set the Christian world abuzz with horror for centuries thereafter and helped give Islam (Turkish division) a somewhat undeserved reputation for Oriental refinement in the cruelest arts of killing. (Undeserved? Check out Joan of Arc's earlier execution by Christians, in effect a pioneering exercise in slow cooking.)

For months the Ottoman hosts of Islam had been trying to capture the city of Famagusta, on the island of Cyprus. Under the brave leadership of their Venetian commander, Marcantonio Bragadino, the garrison held on, but finally came the moment of surrender. Pledges of fair treatment of prisoners were made and Bragadino led out his defeated forces, to be greeted with courtesy by Lala Mustafa Pasha. It's unclear what happened next. It may well have been an impolitic crack by Bragadino, taken the wrong way by the sensitive Turk. At all events the pasha decided to make an example of Bragadino, just to remind the world who's boss—the message the United States wants any trial of Saddam to demonstrate.

Three times Bragadino's decapitation was ordered, the sword flourished then laid aside. His ears and nose were cut off, his body mutilated. For ten days he was forced to carry baskets of dirt in front of the pasha, and then kiss the ground. Finally he was taken to the main square of Famagusta, tied to the stocks and skinned alive. The skin was then stuffed with straw and paraded around on a cow, with a red umbrella over it as a sign of contempt. When the pasha returned in triumph to the Golden Horn, the stuffed skin was tied to the bowsprit.

Now that's what I call a robust demonstration of political power. (The Christians got their own back later that year at the battle of Lepanto.) No nonsense about "tribunals," international law, dispassionate judges. It's actually the plain, blunt approach George W. Bush affects to favor. He should pick a skinner from one of the Texas abattoirs and head for Baghdad. ■

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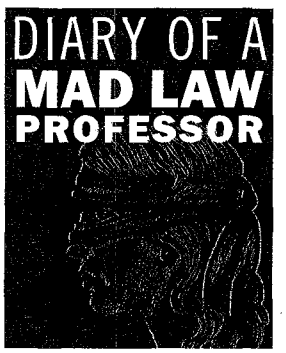
PATRICIA J. WILLIAMS

Money, Money, Money



It really is extraordinary. Bechtel is awarded the biggest reconstruction contract in Iraq without having to compete for it. Halliburton, winner of another no-bid contract, overcharges the government by millions of dollars after only months of service. A Medicare bill passes that prohibits the federal government from negotiating with drug companies for any price but what drug companies set. Congress puts a provision into the Homeland Security Act immunizing Eli Lilly from any lawsuits related to vaccines it produces. Then, of course, there's the tax bill, which transfers such great and unprecedented wealth to the already greatly wealthy.

To Republicans, "privatization" no longer means cost-cutting efficiency. These days, the federal government has been diminished as a public entity, re-emerging instead as a wholly owned subsidiary of various private concerns. Public accountability in every area has eroded, as though information about government were a kind of trade secret. Whether you're from a Democratic district or from France, if you don't "contribute" or "play the game" you will suffer what is sarcastically called "payback," i.e., no recognition of civic partnership, no goodies for you. Loyalty to the directors of this federal-system-as-private-company earns one legislative pork, which is passed out as recklessly by this Administration as bonuses to CEOs at Enron. Government programs reward major political donors as though they were stockholding investors rather than citizens in a representative democracy with no greater or lesser stake than any other citizen.

In 1976 the Supreme Court issued its controversial opinion in the case of *Buckley v. Valeo*, qualifying the expenditure of money as a form of expression protected by the First Amendment. The door opened by that decision has changed the nature of campaign finance, many would say for the worse. If money is a form of "free speech," goes the argument, then rich people end up inherently and always more persuasive than the poor. The McCain-Feingold debate has been the most visible attempt to deal with this issue; and the Supreme Court's recent upholding of the ban on soft money in the *McConnell v. F.E.C.* case is an important acknowledgment of the degree to which unbridled political payment can also corrupt. Even so, the majority in *McConnell* seemed resigned to their inability to wholly stem the excesses, observing, "Money, like water, will always find an outlet."

Recently, Public Campaign, the Fannie Lou Hamer Project and the William C. Velasquez Institute have combined forces to issue a report titled "Color of Money 2003." This study, which can be read in its entirety online at www.colorofmoney.org, is a national effort to focus attention on the relationship between political contributions and access to power and services. It analyzes our current campaign-finance system as a kind of structural barrier to political equality. It looks at the demographic patterns of where most campaign contributions come from. California, in particular Beverly Hills, tops the list. Then New York, in particular the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Then Texas, with oil-rich Houston and Dallas, then the Miami–Palm Beach areas of Florida.

"Neighborhoods comprised mostly of people of color are severely underrepresented in the campaign finance system," says the report. "Given that money typically determines who wins political races, this means that these neighborhoods are effectively disenfranchised. Indeed, nine out of ten individual federal campaign dollars come from majority non-Hispanic white neighborhoods. Yet nearly one out of three adult Americans is a person of color.... Another way to look at it: individuals living in wealthy neighborhoods supply eight dollars for every one dollar that people living in poor communities give to federal campaigns." Julian Bond's introduction to the "Color of Money" study summarizes the concern: "Washington responds to campaign donors first, and voters second. The concerns of ordinary Americans cannot compare with the wealthy executive who raises hundreds of thousands of dollars for a campaign."

This corporate model of governance is evident in the Bush Administration's repeated rhetorical conflation of Halliburton with America itself. Halliburton's no-bid contract has been rationalized as though Halliburton were serving a public trust, or as though it were an arm of the government. But while its employees undoubtedly include many good-hearted American patriots—as no doubt Cheney is the best-intentioned of Vice Presidents—the company itself is not an American interest in any public sense of that word. Indeed, the fortunes of the average American will suffer as taxpayers end up paying through the nose for jobs whose profits go to Halliburton's very private and not necessarily American stockholders. Ultimately, this is not good for voter morale, not good for faith in government; and it is terrible for the economy because the absence of competition is bad, bad business.

The Supreme Court's banning of soft money is one good step toward reclaiming political power as opposed to financial sway; but to revitalize faith in a voter base that feels both jaded and betrayed it will also be necessary to re-examine the recent redistricting plans that have made Republican wins all but inevitable in certain areas. It will be necessary to institute much broader use of Clean Money systems, which, as the "Color of Money" report explains, "require a candidate to collect a large number of very small contributions (say $5) within his or her district, which helps the candidate prove broad popular support. Once candidates meet these requirements, then they qualify for a full and equal public grant to run their campaign." And it will be necessary to confront the extremist ideologues who have disguised old-fashioned cronyism as a new form of laissez-faire. We—that is, all the people—won't have much of a democracy left if everything is for sale and every sale is a deal made behind closed doors. "Take it or leave it" is the way we shop for blue jeans. It demeans our social compact to reduce American citizenship to such cynical consumerist helplessness. ■

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ARTICLES

RISKY BUSINESS

by NAOMI KLEIN

It's 8:40 AM and the Sheraton Hotel ballroom thunders with the sound of plastic explosives pounding against metal. No, this is not the Sheraton in Baghdad, it's the one in Arlington, Virginia. And it's not a real terrorist attack, it's a hypothetical one. The screen at the front of the room is playing an advertisement for "bomb resistant waste receptacles": This trash can is so strong, we're told, it can contain a C4 blast. And its manufacturer is convinced that given half a chance, these babies would sell like hotcakes in Baghdad—at bus stations, Army barracks and, yes, upscale hotels. Available in Hunter Green, Fortuneberry Purple and Windswept Copper.

This is ReBuilding Iraq 2, a gathering of 400 businesspeople itching to get a piece of the Iraqi reconstruction action. They are here to meet the people doling out the cash, in particular the $18.6 billion in contracts to be awarded in the next two months to companies from "coalition partner" countries. The people to meet are from the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), its new Program Management Office, the Army Corps of Engineers, the US Agency for International Development, Halliburton, Bechtel and members of Iraq's interim Governing Council. All these players are on the conference program, and delegates have been promised that they'll get a chance to corner them at regularly scheduled "networking breaks."

By now there have been dozens of similar trade shows on the business opportunities created by Iraq's decimation, held in hotel ballrooms from London to Amman. By all accounts, the early conferences throbbed with the sort of cash-drunk euphoria not seen since the heady days before the dot-coms crashed. But it soon becomes apparent that something is not right at ReBuilding Iraq 2. Sure, the organizers do the requisite gushing about how "non-military rebuilding costs could near $500 billion" and that this is "the largest government reconstruction effort since Americans helped to rebuild Germany and Japan after the Second World War."

But for the undercaffeinated crowd staring uneasily at exploding garbage cans, the mood is less gold rush than grim determination. Giddy talk of "greenfield" market opportunities has been supplanted by sober discussion of sudden-death insurance; excitement about easy government money has given way to controversy

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about foreign firms being shut out of the bidding process; exuberance about CPA chief Paul Bremer's ultraliberal investment laws has been tempered by fears that those laws could be overturned by a directly elected Iraqi government.

At ReBuilding Iraq 2, held on December 3–4, it seems finally to have dawned on the investment community that Iraq is not only an "exciting emerging market"; it's also a country on the verge of civil war. As Iraqis protest layoffs at state agencies and make increasingly vocal demands for general elections, it's becoming clear that the White House's prewar conviction that Iraqis would welcome the transformation of their country into a free-market dream state may have been just as off-target as its prediction that US soldiers would be greeted with flowers and candy.

I mention to one delegate that fear seems to be dampening the capitalist spirit. "The best time to invest is when there is still blood on the ground," he assures me. "Will you be going to Iraq?" I ask. "Me? No, I couldn't do that to my family."

He was still shaken, it seemed, by the afternoon's performance by ex-CIAer John MacGaffin, who had harangued the crowd like a Hollywood drill sergeant. "Soft targets are us!" he bellowed. "We are right in the bull's-eye.... You must put security at the center of your operation!" Lucky for us, MacGaffin's own company, AKE Group, offers complete counterterrorism solutions, from body armor to emergency evacuations.

It is finally dawning on investors that Iraq is not only an 'exciting emerging market' but a country on the verge of civil war.

Youssef Sleiman, managing director of Iraq Initiatives for the Harris Corporation, has a similarly entrepreneurial angle on the violence. Yes, helicopters are falling, but "for every helicopter that falls there is going to be replenishment."

I begin to notice that many of the delegates at ReBuilding Iraq 2 are sporting a similar look: Army-issue brush cuts paired with dark business suits. The guru of this gang is retired Maj. Gen. Robert Dees, freshly hired out of the military to head Microsoft's "defense strategies" division. Dees tells the crowd that rebuilding Iraq has special meaning for him because, well, he was one of the people who broke it. "My heart and soul is in this because I was one of the primary planners of the invasion," he says with pride. Microsoft is helping develop "e-government" in Iraq, which Dees admits is a little ahead of the curve, since there is no g-government in Iraq—not to mention functioning phones lines.

No matter. Microsoft is determined to get in on the ground floor. In fact, the company is so tight with Iraq's Governing Council that one of its executives, Haythum Auda, served as the official translator for the council's Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Sami Azara al-Ma'jun, during the conference. "There is no hatred against the coalition forces at all," al-Ma'jun says, via Auda. "The destructive forces are very minor and these will end shortly.... Feel confident in rebuilding Iraq!"

The speakers on a panel about "Managing Risks" have a different message: Feel afraid about rebuilding Iraq, very afraid. Unlike previous presenters, their concern is not the obvious physical risks, but the potential economic ones. These are the insurance brokers, the grim reapers of Iraq's gold rush.

It turns out that there is a rather significant hitch in Paul Bremer's bold plan to auction off Iraq while it is still under occupation: The insurance companies aren't going for it. Until recently, the question of who would insure multinationals in Iraq has not been pressing. The major reconstruction contractors like Bechtel are covered by USAID for "unusually hazardous risks" encountered in the field. And Halliburton's pipeline work is covered under a law passed by Bush on May 22 that indemnifies the entire oil industry from "any attachment, judgment, decree, lien, execution, garnishment, or other judicial process."

But with bidding now starting on Iraq's state-owned firms, and foreign banks ready to open branches in Baghdad, the insurance issue is suddenly urgent. Many of the speakers admit that the economic risks of going into Iraq without coverage are huge: Privatized firms could be renationalized, foreign ownership rules could be reinstated and contracts signed with the CPA could be torn up.

Normally, multinationals protect themselves against this sort of thing by purchasing "political risk" insurance. Before he got the top job in Iraq this was Bremer's business—selling political risk, expropriation and terrorism insurance at Marsh & McLennan Companies, the largest insurance brokerage firm in the world. Yet in Iraq, Bremer has overseen the creation of a business climate so volatile that private insurers—including his old colleagues at Marsh & McLennan—are simply unwilling to take the risk. Bremer's Iraq is, by all accounts, uninsurable.

"The insurance industry has never been up against this kind of exposure before," R. Taylor Hoskins, vice president of Rutherford International insurance company, tells the delegates apologetically. Steven Sadler, managing director and chairman at Marsh Industry Practices, a division of Bremer's old firm, is even more downbeat. "Don't look to Iraq to find an insurance solution. Interest is very, very, very limited. There is very limited capacity and interest in the region."

It's clear that Bremer knew Iraq wasn't ready to be insured: When he signed Order 39, opening up much of Iraq's economy to 100 percent foreign ownership, the insurance industry was specifically excluded. I ask Sadler, a Bremer clone with slicked-back hair and bright red tie, whether he thinks it's strange that a former Marsh & McLennan executive could have so overlooked the need for investors to have insurance before they enter a war zone. "Well," he says, "he's got a lot on his plate." Or maybe he just has better information.

Just when the mood at ReBuilding Iraq 2 couldn't sink any lower, up to the podium strides Michael Lempres, vice president of insurance at the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). With a cool confidence absent from the shellshocked proceedings so far, he announces that investors can relax: Uncle Sam will protect them.

A US government agency, OPIC provides loans and insurance to US companies investing abroad. And while Lempres agrees with earlier speakers that the risks in Iraq are "extraordinary and unusual," he also says that "OPIC is different. We do not exist primarily to generate profit." Instead, OPIC exists to "support US foreign policy." And since turning Iraq into a free-trade zone

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is a top Bush policy goal, OPIC will be there to help out. Earlier that same day, President Bush signed legislation providing "the agency with enhancements to its political risk insurance program," according to an OPIC press release.

Armed with this clear political mandate, Lempres announces that the agency is now "open for business" in Iraq, and is offering financing and insurance—including the riskiest insurance of all: political risk. "This is a priority for us," Lempres says. "We want to do everything we can to encourage US investment in Iraq."

The news, as yet unreported, appears to take even the highest-level delegates by complete surprise. After his presentation, Lempres is approached by Julie Martin, a political risk specialist at Marsh & McLennan.

"Is it true?" she demands.

Lempres nods. "Our lawyers are ready."

"I'm stunned," Martin says. "You're ready? No matter who the government is?"

"We're ready," Lempres replies. "If there's an expro[priation] on January 3, we're ready.... I don't know what we're going to do if someone sinks a billion dollars into a pipeline and there's an expro."

Lempres doesn't seem too concerned about these possible "expros," but it's a serious question. According to its official mandate, OPIC functions "on a self-sustaining basis at no net cost to taxpayers." But Lempres admits that the political risks in Iraq are "extraordinary." If a new Iraqi government expropriates and re-regulates across the board, OPIC could be forced to compensate dozens of US firms for billions of dollars in lost investments and revenues, possibly tens of billions. What happens then?

While the enormous profits being made in Iraq are strictly private, it turns out that the entire risk is being shouldered by the public.

At the Microsoft-sponsored cocktail reception in the Galaxy Ballroom that evening, Robert Dees urges us "to network on behalf of the people of Iraq." I follow orders and ask Lempres what happens if "the people of Iraq" decide to seize back their economy from the US firms he has so generously insured. Who bails out OPIC? "In theory," he says, "the US Treasury stands behind us." That means the US taxpayer. Yes, them again: The same people who have already paid Halliburton, Bechtel et al. to make a killing on Iraq's reconstruction would have to pay these companies *again*, this time in compensation for their losses. While the enormous profits being made in Iraq are strictly private, it turns out that the entire risk is being shouldered by the public.

For the non-US firms in the room, OPIC's announcement is anything but reassuring: Since only US companies are eligible for its insurance, and the private insurers are sitting it out, how can they compete? The answer is that they likely cannot. Some countries may decide to match OPIC's Iraq program. But in the short term, not only has the US government barred companies from non–"coalition partners" from competing for contracts against US firms, it has made sure that the foreign firms that are allowed to compete will do so at a serious disadvantage.

The reconstruction of Iraq has emerged as a vast protectionist racket, a neocon New Deal that transfers limitless public funds —in contracts, loans and insurance—to private firms, and even gets rid of the foreign competition to boot, under the guise of "national security." Ironically, these firms are being handed this corporate welfare so they can take full advantage of CPA-imposed laws that systematically strip Iraqi industry of all its protections, from import tariffs to limits on foreign ownership. Michael Fleisher, head of private-sector development for the CPA, recently explained to a group of Iraqi businesspeople why these protections had to be removed. "Protected businesses never, never become competitive," he said. Quick, somebody tell OPIC and Paul Wolfowitz.

The issue of US double standards comes up again at the conference when a CPA representative takes the podium. A legal adviser to Bremer, Carole Basri has a simple message: Reconstruction is being sabotaged by Iraqi corruption. "My fear is that corruption will be the downfall," she says ominously, blaming the problem on "a thirty-five-year gap in knowledge" in Iraq that has made Iraqis "not aware of current accounting standards and ideas on anticorruption." Foreign investors, she said, must engage in "education—bring people up to world-class standards."

It's hard to imagine what world-class standards she's referring to, or who, exactly, will be doing this educating. Halliburton, with its accounting scandals back home and its outrageous overbilling for gasoline in Iraq? The CPA, with its two officers under investigation for bribetaking, and nonexistent fiscal oversight? On the final day of ReBuilding Iraq 2, the cover headline in our complimentary copies of the *Financial Times* (a conference sponsor) is "Boeing linked to Perle investment fund." Perhaps Richard Perle—who supported Boeing's $18 billion refueling-tanker deal and extracted $20 million from Boeing for his investment fund—can teach Iraq's politicians to stop soliciting "commissions" in exchange for contracts.

For the Iraqi expats in the audience Basri's is a tough lecture to sit through. "To be honest," says Ed Kubba, a consultant and board member of the American Iraqi Chamber of Commerce, "I don't know where the line is between business and corruption." He points to US companies subcontracting huge taxpayer-funded reconstruction jobs for a fraction of what they are getting paid, then pocketing the difference. "If you take $10 million from the US government and sub the job out to Iraqi businesses for a quarter-million, is that business, or is that corruption?"

These were the sorts of uncomfortable questions faced by George Sigalos, director of government relations for Halliburton KBR. In the hierarchy of Iraqi reconstruction, Halliburton is king, and Sigalos sits onstage, heavy with jeweled ring and gold cufflinks, playing the part. But the serfs are getting restless, and the room quickly turns into a support group for jilted would-be subcontractors.

"Mr. Sigalos, what are we going to have to do to get some subcontracts?"

"Mr. Sigalos, when are you going to hire some Iraqis in management and leadership?"

"I have a question for Mr. Sigalos. I would like to ask what you would suggest when the Army says 'Go to Halliburton' and there's no response from Halliburton?"

Sigalos patiently instructs them all to register their companies

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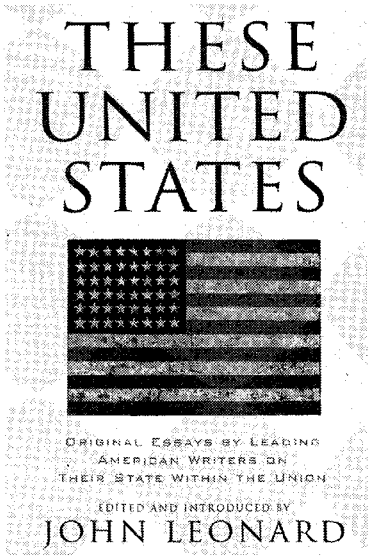
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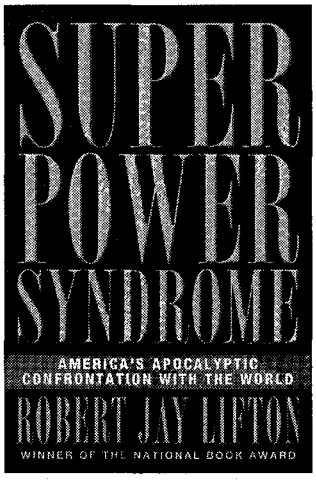
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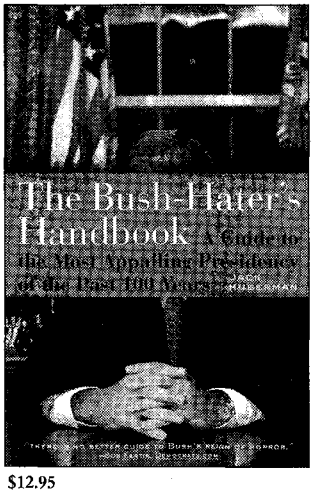

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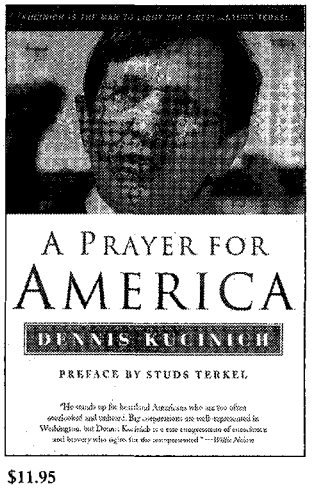

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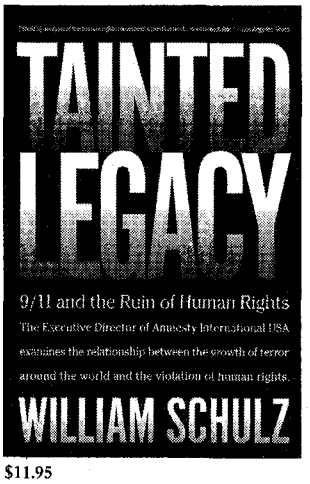
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on Halliburton's website. When the questioners respond that they have already done so and still haven't heard back, Sigalos invites them to "approach me afterward."

The scene afterward is part celebrity autograph session, part riot. Sigalos is swarmed by at least fifty men, who elbow each other out of the way to shower the Halliburton VP with CD-ROMs, business plans and résumés. When Sigalos spots a badge from Volvo, he looks relieved. "Volvo! I know Volvo. Send me something about what you can achieve in the region." But the small, no-name players who have paid their $985 entrance fees, here to hawk portable generators and electrical control paneling, are once again told to "register with our procurement office." There are fortunes being made in Iraq, but it seems they are out of reach to all but the chosen few.

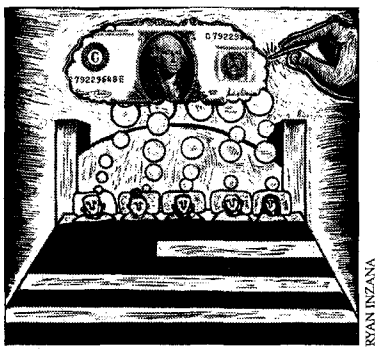
The next session is starting and Sigalos has to run. The serfs wander off through the displays of shatterproof glass and bomb-resistant trash cans, caressing Sigalos's red-and-white business card and looking worried. ■

OUR POLITICAL LEADERS ARE DOING EVERYTHING THEY CAN TO FORTIFY CLASS INEQUALITY.

The Death of Horatio Alger

PAUL KRUGMAN

The other day I found myself reading a leftist rag that made outrageous claims about America. It said that we are becoming a society in which the poor tend to stay poor, no matter how hard they work; in which sons are much more likely to inherit the socioeconomic status of their father than they were a generation ago.


RYAN INZANA

The name of the leftist rag? *Business Week*, which published an article titled "Waking Up From the American Dream." The article summarizes recent research showing that social mobility in the United States (which was never as high as legend had it) has declined considerably over the past few decades. If you put that research together with other research that shows a drastic increase in income and wealth inequality, you reach an uncomfortable conclusion: America looks more and more like a class-ridden society.

And guess what? Our political leaders are doing everything they can to fortify class inequality, while denouncing anyone who complains—or even points out what is happening—as a practitioner of "class warfare."

Let's talk first about the facts on income distribution. Thirty years ago we were a relatively middle-class nation. It had not always been thus: Gilded Age America was a highly unequal society, and it stayed that way through the 1920s. During the 1930s and '40s, however, America experienced what the economic historians Claudia Goldin and Robert Margo have dubbed the Great Compression: a drastic narrowing of income gaps, probably as a result of New Deal policies. And the new economic order persisted for more than a generation: Strong unions; taxes on inherited wealth, corporate profits and high incomes; close public scrutiny of corporate management—all helped to keep income gaps relatively small. The economy was hardly egalitarian, but a generation ago the gross inequalities of the 1920s seemed very distant.

Now they're back. According to estimates by the economists Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez—confirmed by data from the Congressional Budget Office—between 1973 and 2000 the average real income of the bottom 90 percent of American taxpayers actually fell by 7 percent. Meanwhile, the income of the top 1 percent rose by 148 percent, the income of the top 0.1 percent rose by 343 percent and the income of the top 0.01 percent rose 599 percent. (Those numbers exclude capital gains, so they're not an artifact of the stock-market bubble.) The distribution of income in the United States has gone right back to Gilded Age levels of inequality.

Never mind, say the apologists, who churn out papers with titles like that of a 2001 Heritage Foundation piece, "Income Mobility and the Fallacy of Class-Warfare Arguments." America, they say, isn't a caste society—people with high incomes this year may have low incomes next year and vice versa, and the route to wealth is open to all. That's where those commies at *Business Week* come in: As they point out (and as economists and sociologists have been pointing out for some time), America actually is more of a caste society than we like to think. And the caste lines have lately become a lot more rigid.

The myth of income mobility has always exceeded the reality: As a general rule, once they've reached their 30s, people don't move up and down the income ladder very much. Conservatives often cite studies like a 1992 report by Glenn Hubbard, a Treasury official under the elder Bush who later became chief economic adviser to the younger Bush, that purport to show large numbers of Americans moving from low-wage to high-wage jobs during their working lives. But what these studies measure, as the economist Kevin Murphy put it, is mainly "the guy who works in the college bookstore and has a real job by his early 30s." Serious studies that exclude this sort of pseudo-mobility show that inequality in average incomes over long periods isn't much smaller than inequality in annual incomes.

It is true, however, that America was once a place of substantial intergenerational mobility: Sons often did much better than their fathers. A classic 1978 survey found that among adult men

Paul Krugman, an economics professor at Princeton and a columnist at the New York Times, *is the author, most recently, of* The Great Unraveling: Losing Our Way in the New Century *(Norton).*

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whose fathers were in the bottom 25 percent of the population as ranked by social and economic status, 23 percent had made it into the top 25 percent. In other words, during the first thirty years or so after World War II, the American dream of upward mobility was a real experience for many people.

Now for the shocker: The *Business Week* piece cites a new survey of today's adult men, which finds that this number has dropped to only 10 percent. That is, over the past generation upward mobility has fallen drastically. Very few children of the lower class are making their way to even moderate affluence. This goes along with other studies indicating that rags-to-riches stories have become vanishingly rare, and that the correlation between fathers' and sons' incomes has risen in recent decades. In modern America, it seems, you're quite likely to stay in the social and economic class into which you were born.

Business Week attributes this to the "Wal-Martization" of the economy, the proliferation of dead-end, low-wage jobs and the disappearance of jobs that provide entry to the middle class. That's surely part of the explanation. But public policy plays a role—and will, if present trends continue, play an even bigger role in the future.

Put it this way: Suppose that you actually liked a caste society, and you were seeking ways to use your control of the government to further entrench the advantages of the haves against the have-nots. What would you do?

One thing you would definitely do is get rid of the estate tax, so that large fortunes can be passed on to the next generation. More broadly, you would seek to reduce tax rates both on corporate profits and on unearned income such as dividends and capital gains, so that those with large accumulated or inherited wealth could more easily accumulate even more. You'd also try to create tax shelters mainly useful for the rich. And more broadly still, you'd try to reduce tax rates on people with high incomes, shifting the burden to the payroll tax and other revenue sources that bear most heavily on people with lower incomes.

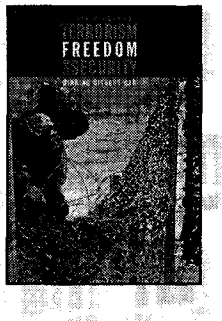
Meanwhile, on the spending side, you'd cut back on healthcare for the poor, on the quality of public education and on state aid for higher education. This would make it more difficult for people with low incomes to climb out of their difficulties and acquire the education essential to upward mobility in the modern economy.

And just to close off as many routes to upward mobility as possible, you'd do everything possible to break the power of unions, and you'd privatize government functions so that well-paid civil servants could be replaced with poorly paid private employees.

It all sounds sort of familiar, doesn't it?

Where is this taking us? Thomas Piketty, whose work with Saez has transformed our understanding of income distribution, warns that current policies will eventually create "a class of rentiers in the U.S., whereby a small group of wealthy but untalented children controls vast segments of the US economy and penniless, talented children simply can't compete." If he's right—and I fear that he is—we will end up suffering not only from injustice, but from a vast waste of human potential.

Goodbye, Horatio Alger. And goodbye, American Dream. ■



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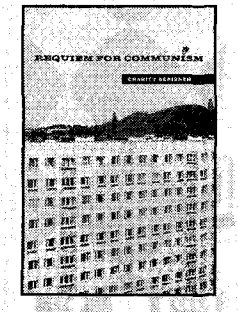

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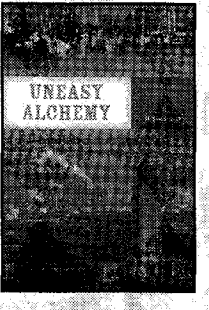

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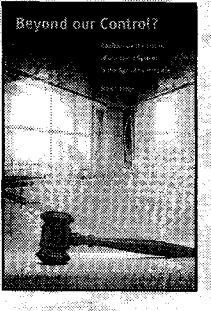

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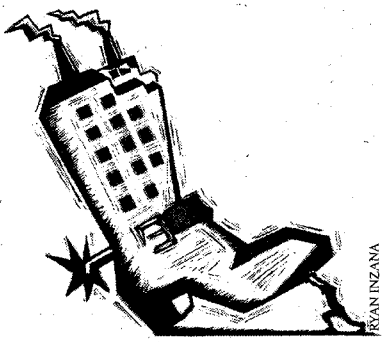
KIM PHILLIPS-FEIN

In cowboy myth and frontier legend, Texas is a land of rebel outsiders, eternally defiant of the East's gray-suited Establishment. Yet the official symbols of the adoptive home of George W. Bush are traditional ones of authority and power. The Capitol building's garish pink dome, larger than that of the Capitol building in Washington, hovers over the city of Austin, a sprawling college town of seedy frat bars and New Age commerce. On the Capitol flagpole, the Lone Star flies below the American flag, emblem of the few brief years when slaveholding Texas was its own republic. A giant bronze statue honors the Confederacy, whose people, we are told, seceded for the mighty principles of 1776 and fought the North, outnumbered, until exhausted. To the side is a mammoth stone tablet, emblazoned with the Ten Commandments. And down the center of the Capitol plaza runs a recently refurbished stone walk, each brand-new brick bearing the name of a different corporate citizen: Enron, Wal-Mart, Philip Morris.



RYAN INZANA

Yet just a few blocks away from the Capitol building there is evidence of another native Texas politics. In a small, one-story storefront, on a scraggly, tree-lined stretch of road, across the street from a temp agency, there hangs a purple-and-yellow sign, calling out to passersby: ORGANIZING FOR JUSTICE: SIGN HERE! This is the central office of the Texas State Employees Union, a statewide local of the Communications Workers of America. Opening the screen door to the office, one sees few posters on the whitewashed walls: Instead, they are covered with lists bearing the names of thousands of members across the state. High on one wall, almost in the corner, is a poem, stitched in needlepoint: "You can break my union heart, you may lock up my union body, you might dampen my union spirit, but you'll never control my union mind."

TSEU has been organizing public workers in Texas since 1980. It is a true industrial union, organizing most state workers without respect to department or occupation. For the past quarter-century it has been one of the few organizations in Texas to try to imagine, let alone to build, an alternative to the corporate frontier. There is no state income tax in Texas, and in fact, the legislature is constitutionally prohibited from passing one. As a result, hundreds of thousands of children were thrown off health insurance (Texas already led the country in the number of uninsured children) this past year to balance a $10 billion budget deficit, while millions of dollars were cut from school funding. State Representative Debbie Riddle of Houston summarized the political logic of such decisions in the *El Paso Times* this past spring: "Where did this idea come from that everybody deserves free education, free medical care, free whatever? It comes from Moscow, from Russia. It comes straight out of the pit of hell." In that spirit, the state legislature passed a bill this past May that will result in the privatization of eligibility determination for TANF (the program that replaced welfare), food stamps and Medicaid—fundamentally transforming the way social services are delivered in Texas. Mike Gross, who once worked for the Texas Youth Commission and is now organizing coordinator of TSEU, says, "We are on the frontlines of the battle to protect the social safety net."

In some ways, the conservative attack on the union and the public sector in Texas today is a microcosm of the assault in the country as a whole. While business organizations and the corporations that stand to benefit lobby successfully for privatization and budget cuts, tens of thousands of state workers lose health insurance, and the social programs that make life bearable for the desperately poor are downsized.

But more is at stake than particular programs and specific benefits. The very existence of the public sector—controlled by people who are democratically accountable, run by workers who aren't in thrall to the Dow Jones—hangs in the balance. The real question in Texas, and in the country as a whole, is whether we want to fight social inequality through the collective power of the state, using its capacities for redistribution to help remedy the sharp inequities of the workplace, or whether we should let corporations, churches and the Salvation Army deal with the problems of the poor. The choice is between charity, with its baseline assumption of unequal power and resources, and the expansive vision of social democracy. Against great political odds, TSEU is fighting not only for its members but also, implicitly, for us all.

On a cool April morning last spring, TSEU held its Lobby Day at the state Capitol, in the middle of the biennial legislative session (the legislature meets for five months every two years). More than 2,000 workers from across the state converged in Austin. They boarded buses from Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Lubbock and other cities; one bus came all the way from El Paso, leaving at 6 PM the night before the rally from the opposite side of the state. Parole officers, admissions attendants in the state's mental hospitals, workers in state laboratories, people who help workers whose jobs have moved to Mexico find new employment, graduate teaching assistants—all came to the Capitol. Some had never been to a demonstration before; one shy Mexican-American man said, "This is my first adventure." Workers carried homemade signs up the hill to the Capitol complex:

Kim Phillips-Fein is a writer in New York City. She is working on a book about the business backlash against the New Deal. *Research support was provided by the Investigative Fund of the Nation Institute.*

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TAX KEN LAY; DON'T DUMP WALL STREET'S MESS IN TEXAS; HOUSTON: WE HAVE A (BIGGER) PROBLEM; THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE MASSACRE. At the end of the rally and march, before going in to meet with their representatives, a union organizer led the crowd in a chorus of "Solidarity Forever," in English and then in Spanish—a sight George W. Bush probably never expected to see.

Historically, the Texas elite has been bitterly anti-union. With its oil industry and old manufacturing base, Texas is one of the more heavily industrialized Southern states, and union membership grew rapidly during World War II. The expansion of the labor movement was greeted with a harsh reaction. The state passed numerous restrictions on labor rights during and after the war, banning the closed shop, secondary boycotts, mass picketing—even before the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, which limited such tactics nationally. Employers and state politicians accused unions organizing in oil ports of being the tools of a Communist plot.

For public workers, organizing is especially difficult. State workers in Texas are legally barred from collective bargaining, and TSEU—like many unions a hundred years ago—has no formal recognition. It depends for its existence on building major demonstrations of its members and lobbying state representatives. But through old-fashioned one-on-one organizing, the union has built a dense activist network with 12,500 members statewide (out of a pool of about 90,000 state employees). Dues are on a sliding scale, according to income, and they range from $14 to $19 a month. Although it cannot bargain contracts, the union is credited with winning pay raises and improvements in benefits in the past and stopping privatization in the mid-1990s, as well as countless smaller victories on the local level.

By privatizing the frontline offices of the welfare state, Texas has placed citizens' well-being in the hands of shareholders and CEOs.

People like Judy Lugo, TSEU's president, built the union. Lugo is an earnest and unpretentious woman in her 40s. Twenty-three years ago, as a single mother with two children, she applied for welfare. She managed to get a job with the agency that helped her out, and today she is a supervisor in the Texas Department of Human Services, working in El Paso, the Rust Belt of Texas. Many of the people she sees applying for benefits in El Paso have college degrees, or used to work in factories that have vanished across the border. The high unemployment rate in the city keeps wages low. "In Dallas, you get a job in a Burger King and it will pay you $9 or $10. In El Paso, you get $5.15."

Over her twenty-three years in the system, Lugo has seen the welfare system go through many changes. Staffing has gone down, and "staff are working more hours just trying to get the work done." Clients can't get through on the phone and aren't applying for benefits. She herself has been hurt by the cutbacks in the state workers' healthcare plan. "I've stopped taking one medication because I can't afford it," she says. Most of the time, in mainstream Texas politics, Lugo's work is sneered at as a spectacle of government bloat. The union is one of the few groups in the state to recognize the daily agony of poverty, to take seriously and lend dignity to the difficult lives of poor people. Meanwhile, the Republican legislature obsessively and repetitively attacks government bureaucracy with the enthusiasm of an anorexic staring in the mirror. Representative Garnet Coleman of Houston, a union supporter, says, "They keep talking about cutting the fat, but we're way under the muscle and we're hitting the bone."

The privatization bill that passed the legislature early this past summer will dramatically change the way that social services are delivered in Texas. It collapses the twelve agencies that serve the neediest Texans—people such as nursing-home residents, abused children, the physically disabled and mentally impaired, the blind and the deaf—into five. It will reduce the work force for these agencies by about 3,500 people over the next two years. While the legislation includes items such as incentive payments for women on welfare who agree to take seminars on marriage, the core of the bill is to privatize the frontline offices of the welfare state. Hundreds of local welfare offices across the state that sign people up to receive food stamps, Medicaid, TANF, children's health insurance, disability and other public benefits will close. There will be no more face-to-face interviews (except in special situations). Instead, workers in four statewide call centers will enroll people from all over the state in programs over the phone. These call centers will be privatized. In addition, state mental hospitals and schools for the mentally disabled may now be sold to low bidders. The result is a huge step toward a welfare state run for profit and traded on the stock exchange—Texas, Inc.—in which the government places the lives and well-being of its poorest citizens in the hands of shareholders and CEOs. The changes start in January, and are supposed to be completed by the end of next summer (though this speedy timetable seems unrealistic to many).

The main corporate player pushing welfare privatization in Texas is ACS State and Local Solutions (the company was once a division of Lockheed Martin, the weapons manufacturer, which sold it to communications giant ACS a few years back). ACS handles contracts for welfare and work-force services, as well as other government functions, across the country. Texas and Florida are its largest markets. In Texas, in addition to holding contracts to run many of the state's work-force programs (helping people get jobs and training), ACS manages eligibility and re-enrollment for CHIP, the state-federal children's healthcare program, and it recently won a contract to process claims from Medicaid clients and pay doctors. The company has been eager to expand its reach over the Texas welfare system ever since the mid-1990s, when it helped push legislation that would have privatized eligibility determination in Texas for all human services—welfare, food stamps and Medicaid. The plan failed when Clinton refused to sign a waiver permitting the privatization (current federal law mandates that civil servants determine who can receive Medicaid and food stamps). Bush, on the other hand, is likely to approve such a waiver—opening the door not only for privatization of welfare eligibility in Texas but across the country (Florida already has a pilot project up and running). And ACS will be poised to win the call-center contracts when they go out next year.

Upper management at ACS State and Local Solutions lives in

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—Dean Rieck,
Direct Marketing magazine
April 2000

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a different world from the client base of the programs it controls. Almost all of the executives are white, and only three out of nineteen are women. Glossy brochures in the ACS office suite depict smiling children and describe the company's success in helping "customers" build a "career that they are in charge of, every step of the way." The company's five-point credo announces that employees are proud to contribute to "shareholder value," and on one office door hangs a sign: WE WILL MAKE OUR NUMBERS!

ACS maintains a staff of twenty-one lobbyists in Texas alone—at a cost of $910,000 a year, according to the *Austin American-Statesman*—a roster that includes a former state senator, a former aide to the Speaker of the House and an erstwhile aide to Governor Bush. The company lavishly donates to political campaigns, giving $25,000 to the Texas GOP, $50,000 to Governor Rick Perry's inauguration, $2,500 to the Comptroller and $18,850 to other state and local candidates (also according to the *American-Statesman*). This legislative session, ACS got what it paid for.

The justification for privatization is ultimately that CEOs are the only people who can be trusted with social power.

ACS is only one member of a highly politicized and aggressive business community in Texas. The Texas Association of Business, which claims to represent 140,000 large and small employers in the state, regularly meets with members of the state legislature and Congressional delegation, and gets very involved in their political campaigns. In 2002 Texas elected a Republican majority to the state legislature for the first time since Reconstruction, and TAB took credit—it had run a $1.9 million advertising campaign during the elections. The leaders of TAB are strong advocates of privatization. Bill Hammond, the president of TAB, was appointed by Governor Bush to oversee the privatization of work-force development during the 1990s. From his swank office a few blocks away from the Capitol, Hammond rehearses the arguments in favor of privatization as a way to reduce costs. Competition among private companies for contracts will drive state spending—and hence taxes—down. Private companies will be able to make innovations, invest in new technology and improve service efficiency in ways that are impossible for lumbering state bureaucracies. In fact, to Hammond, the budget crisis in Texas this past year seems a golden opportunity for the state to evaluate its programs in terms of maximum efficiency. Finally, Hammond believes that corporations will lower costs because private workers won't be as liberal with benefits as public employees are. "If you are a single mom, the last thing you want is welfare," he says. "If you can get a minimum-wage job, you should. It is not a matter of denying someone welfare, but a balanced perspective and presentation needs to be made in terms of going on welfare." Says Hammond, "The public sector just hands out benefits."

In fact, the welfare system in Texas is one of the stingiest in the country, but even beyond this, Hammond's assumptions about privatization are problematic. For one thing, there is little proof that privatization really does lower costs or taxpayer expense. Frequently, overseeing the private contract incurs new costs that offset whatever savings the vendor promises. Elliott Sclar, a Columbia University urban planning professor who has researched privatization, says, "When you hold everything else constant, the differences are at best minuscule and often favor public provision of services."

But since the way that a private company makes money with a state contract is by running the operation for less than the state pays, companies face tremendous incentives to cut wages and benefits. Under privatization, unions would be the first thing to go. States like Florida, in which public-sector workers do have collective bargaining rights, would lose tens of thousands of union jobs. In Texas, while workers in private call centers might gain the legal right to bargain collectively, the call centers are almost certain to fight unionization tooth and nail. Like so many other low-wage employers, they would probably not hesitate to discipline workers for union activity (even though it's illegal).

Because the public sector is at least in theory accountable to citizens, not shareholders, it is different from the private sector in other important ways. Public employers have historically been more ethnically and racially diverse than most private companies, and they have played a critical role in the creation of a black middle class. They do not usually fight unionization with the same bitter intensity, and thanks to civil service rules, they provide more rights and greater protections for employees. By contrast, private employees are accountable to no one except their bosses. Indeed, the leaders of ACS see their power over workers as their main comparative advantage. When asked why private companies would be able to outperform the public sector, Gerald Miller, director of work-force and community solutions for ACS, tells an anecdote. "If Kristin needs a computer today, I can go out and buy it," he says, referring to a new public relations employee whom I had interviewed moments before. "You know what happens if Kristin does a bad job? I fire her."

What's more, increasing the power of management and introducing profit-making considerations into the welfare state has a negative impact on social policy. Public review processes, reporting requirements, adequate staffing—these can seem like "inefficiencies" to private corporations legally bound to deliver the highest return to investors. Prison privatization in Texas, for example, has been a well-documented disaster. In the 1980s Texas sold contracts to manage its overcrowded, violent prisons. In just a few years, the scandals were legion. One privately run jail in northwest Texas that housed inmates shipped in from Hawaii and Montana was not giving prisoners enough food or proper medical care. At a prison run by Capital Correctional Resources corrections officers were videotaped beating up prisoners and setting attack dogs on them. And Wackenhut Corporation lost a $12 million contract when twelve former guards were indicted on charges of having sex with female inmates, some of whom said they had been raped. In practice, "flexibility" can mean cutting back on prison staff and programs, not giving welfare clients due process or making it far more difficult to obtain review of decisions made by the private company.

Are today's developments in Texas a forecast for the nation tomorrow? The Bush Administration has already won massive tax cuts at the national level, while at the same time cutting services,

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pursuing devolution and dismantling what remains of the New Deal. Currently, Bush plans to subcontract hundreds of thousands of federal jobs that are now performed by civil servants. The effect, as in Texas, will be to dole out the public sector to politically connected corporate donors, while attacking one of the few remaining economic sectors where unions still wield substantial power. The ideology of the free market justifies the choice to grant huge contracts governing the lives of the poorest citizens to men and women more accountable to shareholders than to the public good. Yet the image of nimble, agile corporations zipping through an abstract marketplace hides deeper assumptions of a sharply hierarchical social order, for the justification of privatization is ultimately that CEOs are the only people who can be trusted with social power—never women like Judy Lugo.

In Texas, TSEU is determined to keep on fighting privatization. The union has defeated the privatization of welfare delivery in Texas before, and organizers hope that enough people can be educated and organized to stop it this time around too. After all, privatization looks even worse on the ground than on paper. Already corporations are asking that their bids for government contracts be kept secret, beyond public scrutiny. It's not hard to see why: *The Texas Observer* has reported that Gregg Phillips, the man appointed to oversee the reorganization of the agencies, previously oversaw a failed privatization effort in Mississippi; one of his first actions in office in Texas has been to grant a large contract to his previous employer, Deloitte Consulting. Meanwhile, county governments are starting to realize that local Department of Human Services offices are slated for closure, and many are unhappy about it—especially since they are picking up the healthcare costs of the children who have been kicked off Medicaid. Two county governments have passed resolutions condemning the privatization law, and the mayor of Raymondville, a town in south Texas, has publicly protested the planned closure of the local DHS office. The union held a large training session for activists across the state in September, attended by about a hundred people who are determined not to let their jobs go into the private sector so easily. Despite rhetoric about improving services, organizers say, almost no one who uses the welfare system or works in it believes privatization is going to make things better. Reality may be the potent solvent to dissolve the ideology of the free market. In a state of rebels and mavericks, perhaps someday joining the union will be seen as the most powerful rebellion of all. ■

EXCHANGE
CONTINUED

(Continued From Page 2)

and his supporters for Gore's "loss" in the presidential race. They refuse to acknowledge that about 20 percent of registered Dems voted for Dubya and that over 300,000 did so in Florida alone—more than enough to overcome hanging chads, butterfly ballots and disenfranchised felons. But it's easier to find scapegoats than to take a good, long look in the mirror.

Consider this: After the Supreme Court hijacked democracy in 2000, tens of thousands of people were out in the streets to protest the Bush coronation. Here in Seattle there were Nader supporters/Greens everywhere, ready to take a stand with Gore against the coup and to fight for democracy. When I mentioned the protest to a staunch Gore supporter he said, "What good is that going to do?" He and other Democrat friends stayed home—probably to sit in front of their TVs and curse Nader.

I continue to have nothing but admiration and respect for Ralph Nader, but despite the fact that I disagree with Howard Dean on many issues, I'm supporting him in 2004. I even plan to campaign my butt off for him. I have no illusions about how much he is capable of accomplishing, or that he will be much less beholden to corporate interests than Clinton-style Republican Lites, but Bush is such an unprecedented disaster that I'm willing to do almost anything to end his horrendous reign.

However, there's only so much abuse I'm willing to take from Dems. If they continue to attack my party or resort to Texas Republican tactics by redistricting Greens out of legislative seats, then they'll just doom themselves. By further alienating some of the most active, motivated, caring and ethical people the country has to offer, they'll nail their own coffins in 2004. Let's hope they see some sense. GLENN REED

Ojo Sarco, NM

■ Micah Sifry quoted a snippet from the tail end of a well-documented and inspiring speech about why we Greens must run a presidential campaign. I described how narrow the national discussion would be without a Green candidate raising the issues that really matter. I outlined the past sixty years' waste of trillions of dollars on nuclear weapons, the persistent US crime and child-poverty rates, the out-of-control prison-industrial complex, the two-tier healthcare system and the bipartisan destruction of the global environment. I raised my primary issue, the need for a transformation to a peace economy and an end to the government's addiction to the toxic, racist war economy. I concluded with the statement that I had not heard one Democrat talk about those issues, and that none would be discussed unless there is a Green candidate. Then, as Sifry noted, I did say that if the Dems were not going to run on these issues, then what was the point of their running? Change the system. It is time to demand a multiparty democracy.

CAROL MILLER

Topsham, Maine

■ Micah Sifry quotes me as saying of Nader that "he doesn't get the racial issue," which borders on my attributing to Nader a racist edge. This is unfortunate. Nothing, absolutely nothing, could be further from my intent, my posture, my belief, my sense of values and my judgment. I disclaim it totally.

JOHN RENSENBRINK

Washington, DC

■ Throughout the discussion in the progressive press on the risks of Green participation in the 2004 presidential election, there's been little about what happens if the Green Party *doesn't* run a candidate. Without a Green, the race will be limited to two corporate nominees, with minimal or no debate over the invasion of Iraq, space-based missile defense, international trade cabals, oil dependence, national health insurance, privatization, Taft-Hartley, the war on drugs, the USA Patriot Act or the corporate corruption of the political arena. Indeed, most of the Bush agenda was passed with Democratic support—or was already enacted under Clinton. Furthermore, Greens are addressing what really spoiled in 2000 and what might spoil in 2004: racist voter disenfranchisement; manipulated vote counts (a greater risk now, thanks to computerized voting); at-large winner-take-all elections (which could be remedied by instant-runoff voting and proportional representation).

As Democrats have retreated from their stated principles and constituencies, they've given Republicans a license for ever-greater extremes. The Green Party is thus not a passing leftoid fad but a historical imperative—as was the Populist Party, before it committed suicide in 1896 by fusing with the Democrats to defeat McKinley, who won anyway.

Greens are struggling to overcome difficult state ballot-access rules, enacted by Republicans *and* Democrats to block third parties and independents. These rules ironically compel Greens, many of whom would prefer to concentrate on local and state races, to run presidential candidates in order to achieve and maintain ballot status.

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During the national meeting of the Green Party of the United States (www.gp.org) in Washington, DC, this past July, a nonbinding strategy discussion was held at which participants expressed overwhelming support for a national campaign; since then, several state Green parties have held forums with similar outcomes. State Green parties will make the decision democratically at the national Green convention in Milwaukee next June. Micah Sifry documents the wide range of opinion within the party, but what's clear to many Greens right now, even as they debate over whom, how and whether to run, is that they must prepare for an aggressive presidential campaign in 2004.

SCOTT MCLARTY
Media coordinator
Green Party of the United States

SIFRY REPLIES

Hastings-on-Hudson, NY

■ Steve Welzer reports that an overwhelming number of New Jersey Greens who showed up at a meeting want Nader to run. This only proves that small pockets of Green-Nader activists exist, not that there is anything more than a minority of self-identified Greens hankering for Ralph to run an unconditional national campaign. If Welzer's larger claim were true, surely we'd be hearing about activists flooding Nader, and by extension the public square known as the Internet, with appeals for him to run, now that the news of his presidential exploratory committee has leaked. But I doubt the energy is there, and I see no evidence of the 1995 and 1999 groundswells that drew Nader into presidential politics twice. One person close to a "Draft Nader" committee set up earlier this year tells me they "haven't seen much excitement."

Ronald MacKinnon must have read only the online version of my article and missed my sidebar on the "Democrat-Green Death Struggle." In it I make clear that Democrats ought to stop trying to strong-arm the Green Party out of existence and instead pass reforms like instant-runoff voting, or change ballot-access laws so third parties aren't forced to run a presidential candidate as the only way to maintain their line on the ballot. Democrats in Maine and New Mexico—two states where they control the governorship and both branches of the legislature, and where Greens have demonstrated that they have a loyal base of voters—could take these sensible steps tomorrow.

Paul Felton and Pat Gray make no sense. If Democrats in Congress are selling out, the way to hold them accountable is to run for Congress, not President. If Greens put one-tenth the energy they're devoting to the presidential contest into trying to punish corpocrats like Senators Max Baucus, John Breaux or Dianne Feinstein, perhaps such Democrats would back off from the right's agenda. Indeed, one could argue that this is exactly what Nader—and the 2.8 million who voted for him—did in 2000, and that the more progressive tilt of the current presidential field is the response.

I'm heartened by the letters from John Halle and Rocky Neptun, who, as elected officials, both validate my argument that Greens in public office—who have to work with Democrats and earn support from local voters—understand the stakes in this year's election better than party activists accountable to no one but their own consciences. Likewise, Glenn Reed's passionate letter ought to be read by smug Democrats who, pigeonholing all Greens as ideologues, ignore the problems inside their own party that led so many Democratic voters to opt for Bush in 2000.

My friend Carol Miller, on the other hand, demonstrates that very rigidity in her letter. Carol thinks that demanding equals achieving and that putting a Green presidential candidate forward equals getting her far-reaching issues addressed. But hope is not a plan. The Libertarian Party nominates a presidential candidate every four years, but that doesn't get its issues onto the agenda. Context is critical, and while in 2000 the similarities between "Gush and Bore" and the anger among progressives at the Clinton-Gore betrayals created enough space and energy for a viable independent national presidential campaign, in 2004 the differences between Bush and the likely Democratic nominee, and the anger at Bush, are making such a campaign an exercise in futility.

And Scott McLarty, speaking in his official capacity as the Green Party's media coordinator, is only a tad more supple in his argument. If the Greens don't run a candidate, it's far from clear that the race will be limited to two corporate nominees. Unlike every Democratic frontrunner since the Green Party first sprouted here, the likely nominee, Howard Dean, is dependent not on a small group of large donors or power brokers but on a huge base of small contributors. No one can prove this, but it sure looks like lots of grassroots Democrats and independents (and no doubt some Greens) are with Dean not only because they don't want a repeat of the past two disastrous election cycles but also because, at some level, they agree with Nader's trenchant critique of Democratic establishmentarianism and want to overthrow it—from the inside!

Moreover, McLarty's effort to tar the likely Democratic nominee with the sins of corpocrats in Congress just doesn't wash. Unlike Gore in 2000—who was a close companion of Bush on almost everything except guns and abortion, and to the right of Bush on military spending—Dean is an outspoken opponent of the invasion of Iraq, an advocate for universal health coverage (albeit implemented in steps), a late but welcome skeptic on NAFTA and other so-called free-trade deals, a counterpuncher against corporate corruption who has talked about "re-regulating" some sectors of the economy, a critic of the worst features of the Patriot Act, a friend of working people and organized labor who has called for raising the minimum wage to $6.65 and for a $100 billion jobs program, and a scathing foe of big money in politics—to take some salient examples.

Dean is also standing up for gay civil rights and trying to meet Republican racebaiting head-on with a call to common economic interests. I also don't see him endorsing the hasty execution of a brain-damaged African-American man in order to shore up his standing among Southerners. (And speaking of race, it's depressing that no Green letter-writer gives acknowledgment to the anti-Nader views of Hartford City Council majority leader Elizabeth Horton Sheff, one of the Greens' few elected people of color, as I reported. I stand by my quote of John Rensenbrink, by the way, which I understood to mean that Nader didn't grasp the need to campaign harder among communities of color, not that he was in any way a racist.)

Is Howard Dean a perfect progressive populist? Hardly. But I don't see anyone better emerging this year. Is he the same person who governed Vermont as a business-friendly centrist for more than a decade? Certainly, though the process of running for President—especially when one is forced to find a maverick path through a field already crowded with establishment types—seems to have opened Dean's eyes in many important ways. Will he betray the hopes he is now lifting, like the last Democratic governor from a small, rural state elected to the White House? Maybe. But what impresses me most about Dean is the way his campaign is giving his supporters the tools and motivation to hold him accountable to his own promises.

Will they seize the power that Dean keeps telling them they have, or will they subordinate their potential to decide for themselves how to direct their own organizing to whatever the doctor prescribes? The technology they are creating—the MeetUps, the blogs, DeanSpace, Get Local!—could make this into a vital and organic movement from below. But the psychology of civic engagement needs to change too. To Dean's credit, he tells audiences—like Nader, in fact—that they shouldn't believe any politician who claims that his election alone will solve their problems. If Dean's network of self-activating supporters keeps growing and learning, it hints at a democratic promise that we haven't seen since the intense local, face-to-face organization of the People's Party of the 1880s and '90s.

In this context, does another campaign by Ralph Nader make sense? Not if it tries to indiscriminately tar the Democratic candidate with the same pro-corporate, antidemocracy brush Nader justifiably painted Gore and Bush with in 2000. And certainly not if a third Nader campaign puts energy and resources into swing states where a popular front against Bush is most needed.

Of course, Nader has the right to run wherever he wants, and voters who can never stomach the thought of compromising even one of their principles can have the satisfaction of voting their conscience by supporting whomever they want. But the vast majority of progressive voters—concerned about preserving the chance for a more humane, more democratic and more hopeful future—will choose the candidate who has the best chance of removing Bush from the White House next November. How alienating those voters with an indiscriminate run for the presidency builds the Green Party or advances Nader's vision is beyond me.

MICAH L. SIFRY

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Running on Empty

CAROL BRIGHTMAN

FAMILY CIRCLE: The Boudins and the Aristocracy of the Left.
By Susan Braudy.
Knopf. 460 pp. $27.95.

If ever there was an event that called for reflection on what was left of the New Left, it was the 1981 Brink's robbery. After eleven years underground, Kathy Boudin and David Gilbert joined a group calling itself the Black Liberation Army (after the original BLA) in a botched robbery of a Brink's van in Nyack, New York, that led to the death of two policemen and a guard. By then the group, known as "the Family" at the Lincoln Hospital detox center in the South Bronx—from which it had recently been expelled by Mayor Ed Koch—had carried out seven previous attempts. The robbery was intended to cover the mortgage of the new office that acupuncturist Mutulu "Doc" Shakur set up on Strivers Row in Harlem, but after the seventh try, it deteriorated into a drug run for most of the black participants.

The Brink's robbery was something of a watershed in the history of the New Left. Even the Weather Underground, with its twenty-odd bombings, had never killed anybody—apart from the three Weather people who died in the accidental dynamiting of the Wilkerson townhouse in March 1970. Boudin had emerged naked from the pulverized building with Cathy Wilkerson, and stayed overnight with Wilkerson at her parents' house a few blocks away on St. Luke's Place before they disappeared. She did not resurface for another eleven years, and when she did it was in handcuffs, with a twenty-years-to-life sentence for her connection with the robbery, while Gilbert got life imprisonment. Their 14-month-old son, Chesa, was raised by their comrades Bernardine Dohrn and Bill Ayers, who chose to come aboveground the year before Boudin joined Gilbert in the Brink's action.

How did Kathy Boudin, the daughter of Leonard Boudin, one of America's most distinguished left-wing lawyers, and the niece of I.F. Stone, become involved in such a crime? The question was raised anew by Boudin's release this past September 17 from Bedford Hills prison. It's also at the heart of Susan Braudy's *Family Circle: The Boudins and the Aristocracy of the Left.* Although Braudy's book is poorly written and shoddily researched, it has become the subject of flattering attention in the American press, which has found in the Boudin story a parable of what went wrong in the 1960s and '70s. And what went wrong, for reviewers such as Alan Wolfe in *The New Republic* and Thomas Powers in the *New York Times*, was not so much the Vietnam War or racism but rather the recklessness and sanctimony of the New Left.

How did Kathy Boudin, the daughter of a distinguished American lawyer, get mixed up in a robbery by self-styled revolutionaries?

After opening with a lengthy description of the afternoon Boudin and Gilbert dropped Chesa off at the babysitter, rented a truck and met their "colleagues" after the robbery in Nyack, "a group of hard-nosed criminals and self-professed revolutionaries who had just robbed a Brink's truck and killed...one of its guards," Wolfe asks a question he has "the hardest time understanding: how could the parents of a baby drop the bundle of happiness off with a stranger in order to choose death over life?" It's an odd question, or oddly put, and more revealing of the sanctimony of current attitudes toward the family than of past history. In his *Times* review, Powers, who describes *Family Circle* as "an unblinking look at what happens when people convince themselves that ideals can excuse anything," claims that "Braudy shows persuasively that it was not the system, but Leonard's disdain for 'frittering away her life by holding other people's hands,' that pushed Kathy ever further down a dead-end road."

Recklessness was, of course, hardly absent from the left, and is, regrettably, an aspect of any movement worthy of the name.

Carol Brightman's next book, Total Insecurity: The Myth of American Omnipotence *(Verso), will be published in the fall of 2004.*

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But context matters, and Braudy's peculiar book is notable for its lack of historical context. Instead, it's a family story, a romance about "a family circle from hell" (Wolfe), in which the dangers of wealth, competitiveness and infidelity lead to the robbery, which is "as pointless and damaging, in its way, as the war in Vietnam itself" (Powers). A bizarre comparison, this last. And Braudy compounds the absurdity with numerous factual errors about Boudin's family, including its supposed wealth (not acquired until the end of Leonard's career, according to his longtime partner, who finds the comparison of the Boudins with the Hearsts ludicrous); its competitiveness, more style than substance; and Leonard's infidelities, which are pumped up to fantastical proportions—"Leonard loved to compete against friends and family members for first place in a pretty woman's heart"—in part, to fill the gaps in his daughter's career after she joins Weatherman and loses the tail the FBI maintains on Students for a Democratic Society. But more important, the father's domestic crimes are more comprehensible to the author than are the political deeds of the daughter.

Braudy, who lived across the hall from Boudin at Bryn Mawr and remembers hearing her shouting on the phone at her father, has an ambivalent view of her subject. She calls Boudin's politics "glamorous and dramatic" but feels put down by her positions, as if a scholarship student from Philadelphia (which Braudy was) couldn't keep up. Her theory of why her classmate ended up in jail is deceptively simple. As she told Boudin in the one interview she was granted, "I blame your father...you felt you had to risk your life...to compete with Leonard to get his attention." The idea is unconvincing, and lacks a sense of who Boudin was.

In many ways, Kathy Boudin was one of the best. Reading *Family Circle*, we're reminded that here was a young woman who used her advantages to fight for a world in which such advantages would cease to exist. Starting in high school, at Elisabeth Irwin in Greenwich Village (where Angela Davis, misidentified in the class photo, was a classmate), she picketed Woolworth's, protested air raid drills and crusaded against "conspicuous consumption." At Bryn Mawr in 1961, she agitated successfully on behalf of the college's black maids, and the following school year organized the "Second American Revolution," a conference on race relations in the United States. Working with Swarthmore's Cathy Wilkerson and Connie Brown, who later became SDS comrades, Boudin helped establish a temporary "freedom school" and was arrested on charges of "unlawful assembly and affray" for blocking the entrance to a nearby public school.

After spending her senior year at the University of Leningrad, where according to Braudy her father hoped to rid her of any lingering interest in Soviet-style Communism (not hard, if I remember correctly from an essay she wrote for a magazine I edited in 1969), Boudin graduated in absentia at the top of her class at Bryn Mawr. She moved on to SDS though she never joined, Braudy says, as Leonard never joined the Communist Party; but most SDSers never "joined," and Leonard Boudin had no interest in joining the CP. It is one of many comparisons between father and daughter that are fabricated out of thin stuff, or from conversations with one of Braudy's chief sources, Kathy's mother, Jean, who, before her death in 1994, gave Braudy the benefit of her reflections about her imprisoned daughter and the affairs of her husband (who died in 1989).

In the book, Braudy unfurls a plot about a dynasty of lawyers that makes no room for the rebel daughter. And a subplot: The middle figure in the patriarchal trio, the father, is unfaithful to his wife and to his daughter, by way of sleeping with at least one of her friends, and by undermining her. "What no one at Bryn Mawr suspected was that Kathy's stance was not as secure as it looked," writes Braudy. "Her equilibrium depended on Leonard's intoxicating approval, and this was not a sure thing." The Boudin legal dynasty features the great labor lawyer Louis B. Boudin ("B" for Boudinovitch), 1874–1952; and his nephew, Leonard, 1912–89, who represented Paul Robeson, Judith Coplon, Daniel Ellsberg, Dr. Benjamin Spock and the Cuban government; and Kathy's older brother Michael, a conservative whose stellar legal career made him a judge of the First (not the Second) Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston. Kathy, Braudy points out, originally wanted to be a doctor, not a lawyer, but no matter.

In a prepublication interview with David Kirkpatrick of the *New York Times*, Braudy maintains that Kathy tried to outdo her famous father in notoriety, or goodness, or badness. "Ms. Boudin wanted to attack the sanctity of the law that her father held dear," writes Kirkpatrick. "But [Braudy] also argued that Ms. Boudin wanted to win as a client the attention she missed as a daughter. She may have also wanted 'to see him trumped by a case he could not win.'" Even though Boudin first called William Kunstler for the Brink's case, she soon settled on her father. "To horrified and fascinated friends," writes Braudy, "Kathy and her father seemed to have been preparing for the family tragedy for decades." But this makes little sense, and masks the fact that until shortly before the robbery, when Boudin had started meeting with her father to discuss the legal terms of her possible re-emergence, she'd had almost no contact with him.

When the trial finally comes, we're tired of the psychobabble about father and daughter ("Kathy was more terrified than ever that if stripped of her glamorous and dramatic revolutionary attachments, she would be the dullest person in Leonard's circle"), which fills in for the untold story. We're ready to sink our teeth into the courtroom drama, but instead we get jailhouse news—which is fascinating, and opens up twenty-two years of teaching, writing and AIDS counseling, twice as long as the underground period, and prepares us for Boudin's release. But first we need to know why she stayed underground when most of her Weather mates did not, and why she agreed to rent the getaway truck for the Family's boss, "Doc" Shakur.

Braudy leans heavily on John Castellucci's *The Big Dance: The Untold Story of Weatherman Kathy Boudin and the Terrorist Family That Committed the Brink's Robbery Murders* (1986) for material on Boudin's experience renting vehicles for the Family, and on how her attention to Family politics began to wander after Chesa was born. There is more about the ties between the New York Black Panthers, the Black Liberation Army and the Family she might have used, but the focus on Assata Shakur (*a k a* Joanne Chesimard) seems right. Boudin had admired her for years, and wrote poetry about her; but two years before the Brink's robbery Assata had been broken out of prison and flown to Cuba.

According to Braudy, Boudin lacked the kind of access to the Family that might have warned her of their slide into drugs. Braudy focuses instead on the tug of war between Leonard and David Gilbert in the months before Brink's over whether Kathy should turn herself in. Kathy's own mind is missing from this drama, and it's no easier to imagine it now—except to point out the obvious connection between Boudin's early involvements with civil rights and her admiration for Assata Shakur, and to suggest that she felt it was her duty as a white revolutionary to offer uncritical support to the Family. In this commitment to rid herself of "white skin privilege" she differed from most of her political generation, and for the manner in which she ful-

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filled her duty, she has paid the price.

Braudy has a weak grasp of Boudin's formative years with SDS and Weatherman. She relies on FBI reports of dubious accuracy, and on two memoirs of questionable propriety, by Susan Stern and Jane Alpert, who share her underlying belief that the personal is political. The alternative paper *The Rat* is cited for the coverage of SDS's last hurrah, in Flint, Michigan, at the end of 1969, and the collage Braudy pieces together is barely recognizable. I was there for the Venceremos Brigade, which was recruiting students to go to Cuba, and saw the huge cardboard gun lettered "PIECE NOW" but didn't see punch spiked with LSD (I don't remember any punch), or dance with Dohrn and Diana Oughton (whom Braudy keeps calling by her Bryn Mawr nickname, "Das"), or lead Weather songs like "I'm Dreaming of a White Riot," or shout about "political assassinations." Later that night, Braudy has Boudin joining "women making love on the dance floor," and dancing again, copying young blacks, punching and kicking, jumping "high, winking at admirers, her face red, her curling hair flying and damp with sweat, stamping her bare feet, and shouting at the top of her lungs in unison with the other young people, 'EXPLODE, EXPLODE.'" An awfully long sentence, and one of the better ones. But true? I recall Tom Hayden leading karate, but in this version Hayden is no longer part of the scene she tries to re-create.

It's hard to do justice to a book about history that ignores history. It's not a place where Braudy goes, and when she does, as in "President Harry Truman suddenly declared a 'cold war,'" it precedes a statement about a family member: "Jean was a self-described parlor revolutionary. 'I'll pay you come the revolution,' she would say, hanging up on a bill collector." Braudy writes (with Jean as source) that in the early 1960s Kathy joined Leonard in Havana, and then went off to harvest sugar "as a member of the Venceremos Brigade, made up of students from Cuba and the United States with stars in their eyes..." But the Brigades didn't start until 1969. With no discussion of what's actually happening in the world that interests the activists, it's hard to judge their actions. What makes a second-rate exposé the stuff of first-class reviews—most of which more or less agree with Braudy's conclusion that Leonard Boudin's daughter was lost before she started—is the prevailing dismissal of the protest movements of the 1960s and early '70s. The circumstances behind the movements are forgotten, gone, and so the book is free to tell another story, closer in mood and temper to the present. ■

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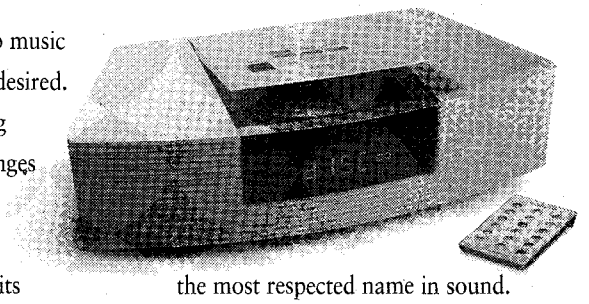

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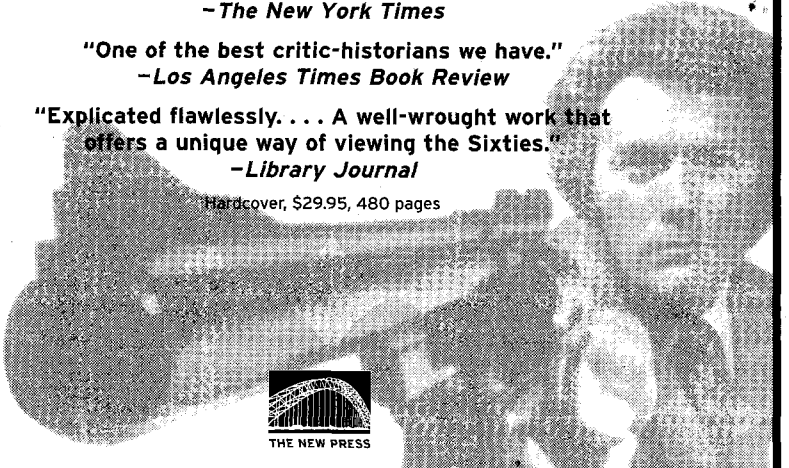

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Skeletons in the Closet

DANIEL LAZARE

Perhaps the best way to understand the history of the early American Republic is as a prolonged variation on the theme of the French Revolution. Although the starting date for that event is usually given as 1789, the process actually began a year or two earlier with a strange aristocratic prelude. Up in arms over royal centralization, the French nobility seized on the state's growing fiscal crisis to call for a return to the "balanced" Constitution of more than a century earlier when the aristocracy and the church had served as an effective counterweight to the power of the throne and the provinces were able to hold their own against Paris. In order for society to advance, the theory went, it needed to go back to some golden age in the past. This position was not unpopular. But then the third estate—the commoners—began asserting its power, arguing that the purpose of revolution was not to turn the clock back but to turn it ahead to some brave new world in the future. For a time, backward and forward, progress and regression, were all bollixed up. But then the radicals were able to consolidate their power beginning in mid-1792, and the process of sorting out one from the other got under way.

A similar process occurred on this side of the Atlantic, only here it has taken a little longer. Most people in British North America—most white people, that is—believed their way of life to be the very definition of freedom until London started tightening the reins in the mid-1760s. Consequently, their goal in rebelling against the stamp tax, the tea tax and other "intolerable acts" was not to go forward but to return to some halcyon age in the past when imperial oversight was minimal. America's restorationist revolution led to a looking-glass system of politics in which progress and retrogression, left and right, were jumbled, just as they were in the initial stages of the French Revolution. The confusion persisted right up to the Civil War, but even then the sorting-out process was cut short when the Radical Republicans lost their grip in the late 1860s. Only with the civil rights revolution of the 1950s and '60s did the great sorting out of left and right, Jeffersonian regression versus Hamiltonian progress, start up again, and only since the 1990s has it really begun in earnest.

American history, as a result, has been stood on its head—or on its feet. Federalists formerly dismissed as conservative elitists have been rediscovered and rehabilitated. David McCullough's celebratory biography of John Adams was a surprise best-seller, as was Richard Brookhiser's 1999 biography of Alexander Hamilton. Previously regarded as yet another stuffy Bostonian, Adams's son, John Quincy, emerged as an unexpected moral hero in Steven Spielberg's 1997 film *Amistad* owing to his legal efforts on behalf of a group of slaves fighting for their freedom.

IN THIS REVIEW

"NEGRO PRESIDENT": Jefferson and the Slave Power.
By Garry Wills.
Houghton Mifflin. 274 pp. $25.

AN IMPERFECT GOD: George Washington, His Slaves, and the Creation of America.
By Henry Wiencek.
Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 404 pp. $26.

INVENTING A NATION: Washington, Adams, Jefferson.
By Gore Vidal.
Yale. 198 pp. $22.

Jefferson, that erstwhile champion of American liberalism, has meanwhile come in for one thrashing after another, of which Garry Wills's *"Negro President": Jefferson and the Slave Power*, is merely the latest. Wills is the author of two previous, largely positive books about America's third President, *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* (1978) and *Mr. Jefferson's University* (2002). But he opens his latest with an apology: "I have admired Jefferson all my life, and still do—though some may question that statement after reading this book." And, indeed, *"Negro President"* is an extended study in moral hypocrisy. Where previously Jefferson had been seen as a high-minded *philosophe* torn between the conflicting goals of slavery and freedom, it's now clear that protecting slavery was always his top priority. Even his championing of the University of Virginia, one of his proudest achievements, was not quite as selfless as it seems. Rather than spreading the light of education for its own sake, Jefferson's real aim, to quote Wills, was to turn out "educated defenders for the extension of slavery westward" and provide "good southerners" with an alternative to abolitionist bastions like Harvard and Yale.

Jefferson's embrace of popular democracy was similarly sullied. According to what most of us learned in high school, the new Republic in the 1790s was suffering under the dual lash of a New York–based creditor class and a group of overbearing, Anglophilic New Englanders. A new oligarchy was taking shape, as the Alien and Sedition Acts and the creation of a national bank showed. But then came Jefferson's "Revolution of 1800," and Americans could once again breathe free. In reality Jefferson's triumph over John Adams was about as democratic as George W. Bush's over Al Gore in December 2000. Wills shows in painstaking detail how Jefferson owed his triumph entirely to the Constitution's infamous "three-fifths clause," which required slaves to be counted as three-fifths of a person for purposes of Congressional apportionment. Slaves could not vote, of course, so the provision gave their owners roughly a third more seats in the House than they would otherwise have had, and roughly a third more electoral votes, just enough to put Jefferson over the edge.

This is why Jefferson's critics referred to him as the "Negro President"—because, they said, he had ridden into the White House on the backs of otherwise voiceless slaves whose sole *raison d'être* was to multiply their owners' political and economic clout. As one newspaper declared at the time, it was as if "New England horses, cows, and oxen" had been used to expand Adams's tally. Federalists were stunned, yet generations of historians, both liberal and conservative, have mobilized to cover up on Jefferson's behalf. Wills notes that two book-length accounts of the Revolution of 1800 by respected academic historians, one published by Knopf in 1974 and the other by Morrow in 2000, ignored the three-fifths clause altogether, as did Page Smith's two-volume 1962 biography of Adams and Dumas Malone's whopping six-volume biography of Jefferson, published between 1948 and 1981. David McCullough's discussion of the clause's role in his 2001 Adams biography is so fleeting that some readers may have missed it. "What was surprising" about the election of 1800, he writes, "was how well Adams had done.... he had, in fact, come very close to winning

Daniel Lazare is the author of The Frozen Republic: How the Constitution Is Paralyzing Democracy *(Harvest).*

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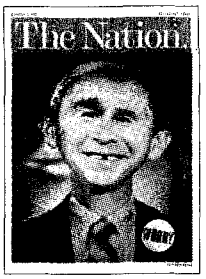

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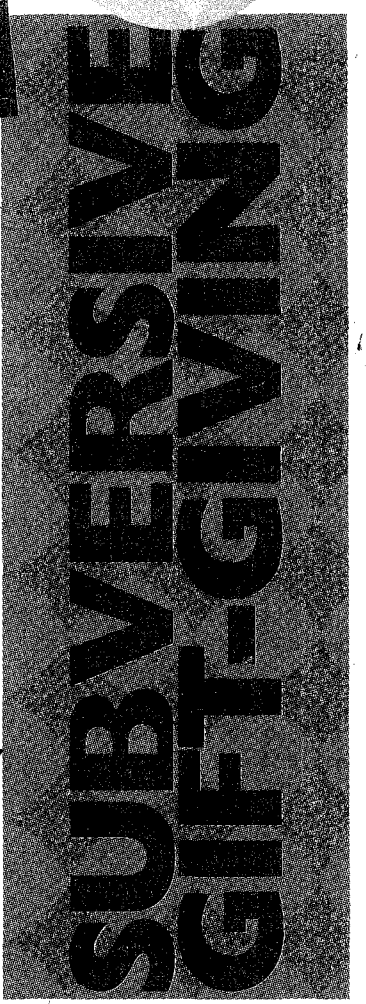

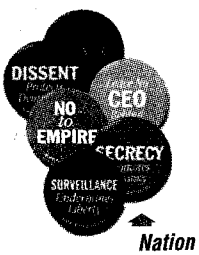

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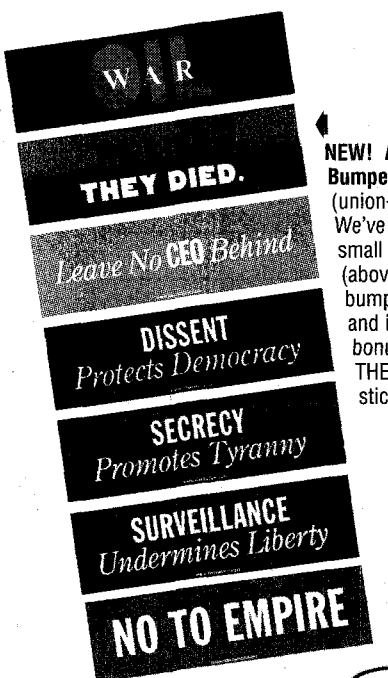

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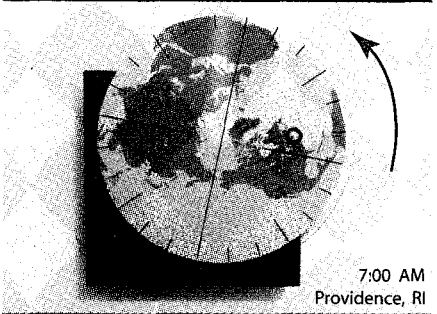

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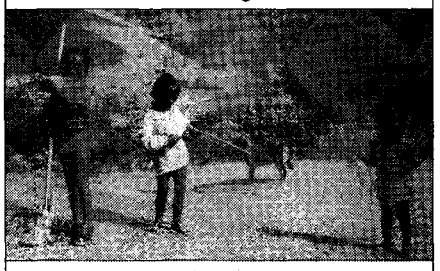
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in the electoral count.... Also, were it not for the fact that in the South three-fifths of the slaves were counted in apportioning the electoral votes, Adams would have been reelected." His man was robbed, yet all McCullough can muster is a single sentence.

Wills is understandably obsessed with the three-fifths clause, which he sees as the basic motor force behind what abolitionists called "the slave power." Not only did it allow the slave states to capture the White House in 1800 but it allowed them to dominate the federal government as a whole right up to the Civil War. Thanks to the extra votes it provided, slaveowners succeeded in controlling the presidency for fifty of the sixty-two years between Washington's election and the Compromise of 1850, the chairmanship of the House Ways and Means Committee for forty-two of those years, and the Speaker's chair for forty-one. Eighteen out of thirty-one Supreme Court Justices during this period were slaveholders as well. Instead of empowering the people, the American Revolution wound up empowering a tiny slaveholding elite. While moving forward in some respects, America was hurtling backward in others, which explains the popular fury against Southern outrages that exploded across the North in 1860–61, igniting the Civil War.

But while the three-fifths clause deserves much of the blame, it doesn't deserve all of it. Other constitutional provisions were also important to the Southern cause—for example, the equal representation clause in Article I, which gives each state two seats in the Senate regardless of population, or the complicated amending machinery set forth in Article V. The first provided the South with the constitutional means to offset the power of an increasingly populous North. The second, by requiring approval by two-thirds of each house plus three-fourths of the states for any constitutional change, no matter how minor, enabled Southern states to see to it that any attempt at constitutional reform of slavery would never get off the ground. Individually, each of these provisions gave Jefferson and his fellow slaveowners a significant edge. But it was only collectively that they provided them with a stranglehold over national policy that was virtually unbreakable.

Wills's silence on these other aspects of the problem is curious. One reason may be that the three-fifths clause is safely in the past thanks to the Thirteenth Amendment, which, by abolishing slavery, rendered it null and void in 1865. But the others are not. The Senate, still organized on the basis of equal state representation, is as unrepresentative as ever (if not more so) thanks to a growing demographic gap between mega-states like California (population: 35.1 million) and micro-states like Wyoming (population: 499,000). By allowing thirteen states representing as little as 4.4 percent of the population to veto any and all efforts at constitutional reform, Article V is no less unfair and undemocratic. It is the survival of antiquated provisions like these that is so perplexing, which is perhaps why Wills prefers to stick to something a bit easier.

Henry Wiencek's *An Imperfect God* is another exploration of slavery and the founders, in this case George Washington. It's an important topic not only because Washington is such a revered figure in American history but because he was an especially interesting type: a Federalist who was not from New England or the mid-Atlantic region but from Virginia, and hence one who was increasingly at odds with the rest of his class.

As Wiencek shows, Washington's attitudes toward slavery were initially fairly typical. As the owner or manager of 18,000 acres of land and some 250 slaves by virtue of his marriage to the wealthy widow Martha Custis, he minimized costs, maximized output and maintained discipline by dressing his slaves in rags, auctioning off their children, ordering the disobedient among them to be whipped and punishing captured runaways by shipping them off to disease-ridden pestholes in the West Indies where he knew they would likely die from overwork. When it came to the British, meanwhile, he was capable of hypocrisy so soaring it can only be described as Jeffersonian. Denouncing taxation without representation in 1764, for instance, he declared: "The crisis is arrived when we must assert our rights or submit to every imposition that can be heaped on us till custom and use shall make us as tame and abject slaves as the blacks we rule over with such arbitrary sway." He would be damned if he would allow the British to do unto him as he did unto others.

What changed Washington was his participation in a national struggle. Jefferson, a Virginia loyalist to his dying day, rarely left his home state during the Revolutionary War. Washington, by contrast, rarely returned. Elected commander in chief of the Continental forces in the summer of 1775, he quickly left for Massachusetts, where fighting had broken out the previous April. There he not only came into contact with radicals who were beginning to draw connections between America's desire for independence and the slaves' longing for freedom, but took charge of what Wiencek says was the most integrated US military force

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prior to the Vietnam War. By 1778 African-Americans would compose up to 13 percent of the Continental Army and, a few years later, may even have accounted for more. As one foreign officer observed, "You never see a regiment in which there are not negroes, and there are well-built, strong, husky fellows among them." Blacks had enlisted in Minute Man regiments and rallied to Paul Revere's call, a black sharpshooter named Peter Salem had shot a British major dead at Bunker Hill and a mixed-race regiment of seamen from Marblehead, Massachusetts, would later save the patriot cause from certain disaster by rescuing 9,000 besieged troops near Brooklyn Heights and ferrying them to safety across the East River.

Washington should have been grateful, but instead was torn. Free blacks who had taken up arms were bad enough from the planter point of view, but slaves were even worse. How could colonists claim to be struggling for freedom if they had to rely on slaves to do their fighting? One solution might have been to emancipate them in return for military service. That would have made Afro-Americans something approaching a partner in the struggle. But it would also have triggered a profound social upheaval across the South as one slave after another deserted his master to join up. An entire economy based on slave labor would have collapsed. Either the slaves or their owners would get their independence, but not both.

Freedom for the pike was death for the minnow. Faced with such a choice, Washington vacillated. Shortly after arriving in Massachusetts, he issued an order expelling blacks from the ranks. Then, when black veterans of Lexington and Concord objected, he took it back, at least as far as free blacks were concerned. In 1778, he gave his approval to a Rhode Island plan to raise a regiment of slaves by offering them freedom as an inducement to enlist. But when two of his aides, Alexander Hamilton and a wealthy young planter named John Laurens, proposed the same thing on a national scale, he withheld his support. Wiencek notes that Washington was contemplating a massive sale of his own slaves around this time to raise funds. If the Hamilton-Laurens plan had gone through, the value of such assets would have plummeted, something he was not prepared to see happen. Yet when his overseer wrote to complain that Washington's newfound reluctance to break up slave families was making a sale more difficult, the general refused to back down. He was not prepared to see that happen either.

Unlike Jefferson, Washington was genuinely torn between loyalty to his nation and loyalty to his class. Nonetheless, it is to Wiencek's credit that he does not let his subject off the hook. Had Washington freed his slaves while still President, "the effect," he argues, "might have been profound. He would have set the precedent that the chief executive cannot hold slaves." Instead, all Washington could bring himself to do was to draw up a will freeing his slaves after his widow's death. The gesture was painfully inadequate in view of the catastrophe that slavery represented. Still, at least it was something. By contrast, Jefferson not only refused to free his own slaves but in his "Notes on the State of Virginia" advanced a doctrine of black racial inferiority that would provide slaveowners with ideological ammunition for decades to come.

An Imperfect God is a model of controlled indignation. Wiencek admires Washington, yet piles detail upon detail about the slave system of which he was a part: what it meant, how it functioned, the costs it imposed on both its immediate victims and larger society, and so forth. Even for those of us who consider ourselves well informed, the results are shocking. Whether or not black Americans were more oppressed in absolute terms than comparable groups throughout history, three things about their

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By the end of this decade, demographic groups that generally support Democrats will provide the basis for a broad electoral majority. But the Democrats cannot convert this growing electoral base into an election-winning coalition until they overcome the deep split within the party.

Ruy Teixeira

Among rank and file Democrats, the real division is not the ideological split between centrists and populist-progressives but the practical differences between issue-oriented activists and professional political campaign workers. They have different goals, but when these two groups meet in a political campaign they find their needs and objectives overlap. **On basic Democratic principles and values, far more unites them than divides them.**

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condition stand out: Their imprisonment was infinite in duration, extending not just to them but to all their descendants; their treatment was unmitigated by either custom, law or religious morality; and their enslavement took place in an otherwise advanced society in which everyone around them, slaveowners first and foremost, was shouting for freedom and natural rights. The combination was (and is) infuriating.

Gore Vidal's *Inventing a Nation: Washington, Adams, Jefferson*, on the other hand, is not an example of the new American historiography but of the persistence of the old. Vidal, as most readers are aware, is a patriot at war with his own country. Like a lot of people, he is furious over Bush's theft of the White House in December 2000 and his use of 9/11 as a latter-day Reichstag fire with which to plunge the country into war and repression. Yet the curious thing about Vidal is that the more anti-American he becomes, the more American he reveals himself to be. In politico-taxonomical terms, he is an "Old Whig," a premodern Anglo-American type that our eighteenth-century Constitution has preserved as if in amber. The Old Whigs were angry patriots furious over their country's slide into imperialist decadence and filled with nostalgia for the rustic old Republic, when ways were simpler and people were braver, more courageous and more honest. Thus, Vidal is amused by the shortcomings of Washington, Jefferson et al., he chuckles over their foibles, but he believes in the end that they tower over their modern-day equivalents. He quotes John F. Kennedy as asking one morning in Hyannis in 1961, "How do you explain how a sort of backwoods country like this, with only three million people, could have produced the three great geniuses of the eighteenth century—Franklin, Jefferson, and Hamilton?"

To which Vidal says he replied: "Time. They had more of it. They stayed home on the farm in winter. They read. Wrote letters. Apparently, thought, something no longer done—in public life."

Nonsense. As impressive as Franklin and Hamilton were (Jefferson is another story), their greatness had to do with the fact that they were in a position to benefit from historical opportunities unavailable to many of their contemporaries, for example, all those slaves languishing in the American South. As for "the three great geniuses of the eighteenth century"—a century that gave us Haydn, Mozart, Kant, Robespierre and Toussaint L'Ouverture, to name a very, very

claims in *Inventing a Nation* to be a fan of Henry Adams's histories. If so, he should know that Adams reserved his most withering contempt for American chest-thumping of precisely this sort.

This is not to say that *Inventing a Nation* is without wit or insight. Vidal knows his subjects well and paints each portrait with a few deft strokes. There is Washington as the canny politician, Franklin as the wise old sensualist and the short, fat John Adams ("His Rotundity") as someone oscillating between bouts of vanity and self-pity. Adams, "the best-read man in Boston," has something catty to say about nearly everyone who heaves into view—Hamilton ("bastard brat of a Scotch peddler"), Franklin ("in a constant state of dissipation"), Jefferson ("indolent...poisoned with ambition") and so on—and Vidal, with his fine ear for gossip, quotes him with relish. Washington struggles to control his Cabinet, Hamilton plots and conspires and makes life miserable for Adams, while Chief Justice John Marshall, like Washington a Virginia Federalist, prepares to smite the Jeffersonians with *Marbury v. Madison* and judicial review—Vidal's political comedy is nothing if not busy.

Still, there's something a bit musty about the whole exercise. Not surprisingly, perhaps, given Vidal's roots in the Virginia gentry, *Inventing a Nation* is consistently hostile to Hamilton, the great modernizer of the period, while apologetic about Jefferson and his dependence on slave labor. "If all men are created equal, then, if you are serious, free your slaves, Mr. Jefferson," he admonishes. Vidal adds, however, "But they were his capital. He could not and survive, and so he did not.... It might be useful for some of his overly correct critics to try to put themselves in his place." Yet Jefferson has come under repeated assault in recent years not only because he refused to free his slaves but because he sought to extend slavery to the West while protecting it against Northern dynamos like Hamilton. *Nation* readers will enjoy the anti-Bush jabs that Vidal weaves into his account, but what will they make of his swipe at Lincoln for his neo-Federalism? In his first draft of a resolution eventually adopted by the Kentucky state legislature in 1799, Jefferson argued that states had the power to nullify—refuse to execute—federal policies they viewed as unconstitutional. Vidal comments:

> The man who had once—rashly?—said that "the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants" was indeed on record that if a state denied liberty to its lawful citizens, revolution is, as it was in 1776, the weapon of choice. This is a great truth savagely if not fatally tested by a Civil War in which the abolition of slavery re-

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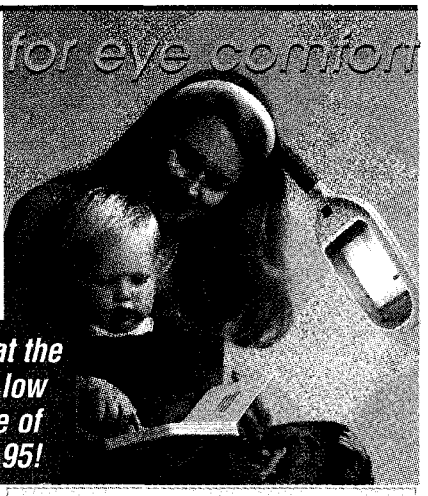

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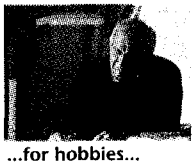
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placed disunion, despite Lincoln's most poetic efforts to the contrary, and any hope of a decentralized Union as the issue has been dead until this day.

Vidal confuses secession with revolution and, near as I can make out, seems to be accusing Lincoln of using slavery as an excuse to ram through a centralized state. Vidal, for one, wishes that he hadn't. If only Lincoln had abolished slavery and left it at that, we would have the old Republic back in all its homespun, decentralized glory, purged of its original sin. Imperialism, product of a centralized state, would never have reared its ugly head. Instead of a hypertrophied White House running roughshod over civil liberties, America would still be a land of checks and balances and separation of powers. Thus, we come full circle to the French aristocracy's politics of nostalgia in 1787–88.

Vidal's explanation of America's fall from grace is similarly nostalgic, resting as it does on that eighteenth-century mainstay, "corruption." He quotes Franklin telling his fellow delegates at the Philadelphia Convention that the Constitution they had just drawn up was probably as good a plan of government as any, but that it "can only end in Despotism as other Forms have done before it, when the People shall become so corrupted as to need Despotic Government, being incapable of any other." Vidal adds: "Now, two centuries and sixteen years later, Franklin's blunt dark prophecy has come true: popular corruption has indeed given birth to that Despotic Government which he foresaw as inevitable at our birth." The result is "Enron *et seq.*, not to mention November 2000, and, following that, despotism whose traditional activity, war, now hedges us all around."

Rather than the Founders failing the people, it is "we the people" who have failed the Founders. Perhaps Vidal should dissolve the people and elect another.

Let me suggest an alternative to this all-too-common narrative of descent and decay. Rather than a race of demigods, the Founders were a group of ordinary mortals—intelligent, resourceful, but otherwise with the full complement of flaws and limitations—who succeeded in coming up with a government yoking together thirteen jealous statelets. Notwithstanding all the complicated Rube Goldberg machinery they put in place, their real achievement was barring the door to the most obvious forms of aristocracy while opening it just a crack to democracy—not the premodern, localist democracy beloved of Jeffersonians but the centralized, mass, neo-Jacobin democracy—"the red lightning of the people's wrath," to quote one Radical Republican—that finally burst through, if only for a time, in the Civil War. Few of the Founders would have predicted such a development, and many would have opposed it. Yet it is the only thing that carried American society forward. We all share Vidal's outrage at the Bush Administration. But when it comes to figuring out where America has gone wrong, he's got it exactly backward. ■

Rebel Without a Cause

RICHARD VINEN

LOUIS MALLE, LE REBELLE SOLITAIRE. By Pierre Billard. Plon. 580 pp. 26 Euros.

By the time that Jeanne Moreau cut the cake for his twenty-fifth birthday on the set of *Elevator to the Gallows*, Louis Malle had already been joint winner of an Oscar for his work on Jacques Cousteau's documentary *The Silent World*. In view of this astonishing success, it is chilling to read the note that the 20-year-old Malle had written on Christmas Day 1952: "Lord Satan, I give you my soul and promise to be your loyal servant if you give me genius, love and cinematographic success in the next five years." Malle's transaction with the devil revealed something important about his relationship with his own conservative, Catholic bourgeois family and particularly with his mother. Superficially he reacted against this background. He became a filmmaker instead of going to the École Polytechnique and joining the family business, he traveled constantly, he had three children by three different women and in his films he constantly mocked the world into which he had been born.

Yet Malle's mockery of provincial conservatism never meant that he entirely renounced its values—as the hero of his 1971 tale of incest, *Murmur of the Heart*, remarks, "Blasphemy has no thrill for those who have ceased to believe." Malle remained on good terms with his family, especially his long-suffering mother. Indeed, good terms with his family were the basis of Malle's precocious success, since the wealth that he derived from being a member of the Béghin sugar dynasty enabled him to found his own production company.

Pierre Billard's new biography, *Le rebelle solitaire*, perceptively links Malle's films to his background and life. It fills an important gap because the most important work previously published on Malle—Philip French's collection of interviews published under the title *Malle on Malle* (1993)—was rather discreet about Malle's private life (French never suggested that Malle's relations with Moreau, Brigitte Bardot and Susan Sarandon, among other leading ladies, might have had a nonprofessional dimension). Billard brings out Malle's charm but also hints at his less likable features; at one point, for example, the director insisted that script girls working on his films should wear blouses with extra big pockets so they could carry his tobacco and pipes for him.

Most of all, Billard puts Malle into a political context that enriches our understanding of the films. This is the area French probed least deeply, perhaps assuming that Malle shared the standard beliefs of the Anglo-Saxon liberal left. In fact, Malle grew up on the right. His mother loathed every manifestation of the French left, from the Popular Front government of 1936 to the election of François Mitterrand as president of the republic in 1981. Louis Malle himself was influenced by associations with two wartime collaborationists. When working with Jacques Cousteau in the early 1950s, he met Cousteau's rabidly anti-Semitic brother Pierre-Antoine, who had narrowly escaped execution after liberation. In 1963 Malle directed *The Fire Within*, based on a novel by another Nazi sympathizer, Pierre Drieu La Rochelle, who had committed suicide in 1945.

Malle's own politics are easiest to define in negative terms. Engagement was not forced on him by circumstances—he was too young to be forced to choose between resistance to the Nazi occupation and Pétainism, while a minor heart complaint saved him from being called up during France's colonial wars (one of his cousins died at Dien Bien Phu). Malle ap-

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parently disliked colonialism (his film on India suggested that he did not like post-colonial native elites much either), but he refused to sign the "Manifesto of 121," supporting the right to disobedience during the Algerian war, apparently for fear of annoying his family. He became famous for "leading" a walkout by members of the jury at the Cannes film festival in May 1968, but his desire to get back to Paris on this occasion was influenced more by curiosity than political commitment. He regarded the solemn debates of the Etats Généraux du Cinéma about art in the service of revolution with amused indifference. A characteristically cynical Malle joke in the early 1970s was to use a group of earnest young Maoists as extras in one of his films; the Maoists thought they were raising money for the cause, but Malle paid them below the union rate.

Malle's political enthusiasms were reserved for matters outside France, and outside a conventional left/right spectrum. He was particularly concerned about the destruction of the Amazon rainforest, and his only explicit political engagement came when he supported the environmentalist René Dumont in the 1974 presidential election.

Probably the single individual who was closest to Malle's political outlook was Roger Nimier—the novelist who wrote the screenplay for *Elevator to the Gallows*. Nimier cultivated an image of detached dandyism as a deliberate riposte to the political earnestness of Sartre and his associates. In particular, Nimier rejected the claims of the resistance to have a monopoly of moral virtue—significantly, both Malle (born in 1932) and Nimier (born in 1925) regarded resistance leaders as representatives of the "older generation."

Malle's portrayal of the occupation in *Lacombe Lucien* (1974) is a deliberate attempt to break with the resistance pieties that had formerly dominated discussion of the occupation. The film feels almost like a deliberate inversion of Robert Bresson's *A Man Escaped* (1956), a film on which Malle had briefly worked as a young man. Bresson's film is spare, quiet and shot in black and white. Malle's film is accompanied by a lively jazz soundtrack and shot in color. In Bresson's film a young boy who had fought with the Germans is redeemed and rescued by a resistance hero; in Malle's film, a young boy joins pro-German forces after being rejected by the resistance. Most of all, Bresson's film is intensely Christian. Malle's film has no hero and, perhaps, no real villain either. It is, like all of Malle's films, self-consciously blasphemous. All the usual assumptions about the occupation are turned on their head. The resistance leader is a bad-tempered and self-important middle-aged primary school teacher. By contrast, the man who initiates Lucien into the ways of collaboration (a traitor, fascist, coward and wastrel) is presented as a man of seductive charm; he bears a more than passing resemblance to Malle's rebellious elder brother.

One might argue, as no doubt many earnest left-wingers in the early 1970s did, that the emphasis on adolescent rebellion that pervades so many of Malle's films has conservative implications. First such an emphasis drains ordinary political distinctions of their significance because almost all politics is treated as an absurd manifestation of the adult world. In *Murmur of the Heart* (1971), two teenage boys mock their stolid provincial father for his political beliefs. When he talks of Mendès-France as a leader who will save France, they recite a long list of other providential men in whom parts of the French bourgeoisie have invested their faith before finishing with the words, "Why not Maréchal Pétain?" No doubt the boys would have laughed at their father even more if he had tried to explain the rather large difference between Mendès-

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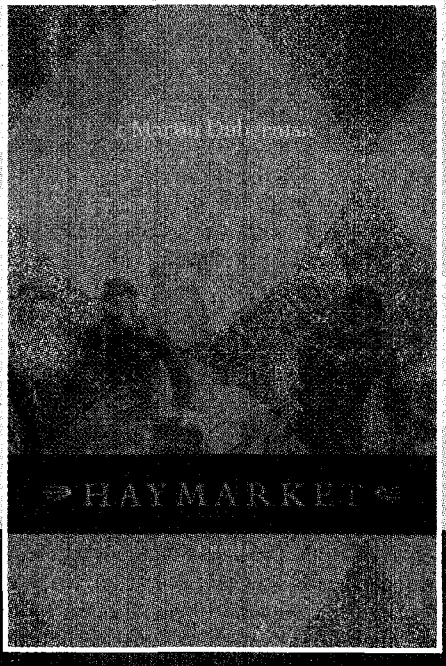

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France, a Jew who escaped a Vichy prison to join the Free French, and Pétain, head of the Vichy state.

Besides, the adolescent rebellion of Malle's films is the opposite of political revolution. Adult rules are suspended during brief periods of fugue or carnival, but they are never abolished. The bourgeois adolescent rebels of Malle's films are destined to be absorbed into the adult world (as in *Murmur of the Heart* or *Au Revoir les Enfants*); the proletarian rebels of *Lacombe Lucien* or *Elevator to the Gallows* are destined to be destroyed by the adult world. The political futility of adolescent rebellion is particularly striking in his 1990 film *May Fools* because the adolescents in this case are actually middle-aged. Excited by the student demonstrations of 1968 in Paris, a bourgeois family in a country house have sex, smoke dope and discuss absurd political utopias (in a characteristic Malle inversion, the only "adult" in this film is a little girl). When they believe that a real revolution is imminent, however, they are terrified, and the film ends with them queuing up to shake the hand of a policeman who will protect their property and restore order.

Billard's biography is also good on the relations between Malle and other filmmakers of his generation. Malle got a raw deal out of the New Wave. Unlike his contemporaries, he did not benefit much from the sudden interest in young filmmakers during the late 1950s, because his career was already launched; however, his subsequent reputation has suffered from the perception that he was somehow less important than Godard or Truffaut. In fact, if you go through Malle's films individually, his originality shines out. (Pauline Kael was one of the few critics who fully appreciated Malle's genius.) The opening shots of *Elevator to the Gallows*, filmed with a camera in a baby's pram being pushed down the Champs Elysées and lit only by the light coming from shop windows, are as arresting as the opening shots of Godard's *Breathless*, though it's the Godard film that pops up on every film studies syllabus. The soundtrack of *Elevator to the Gallows* alone, recorded by Miles Davis in a single jam session, ought to be enough to secure any director his place in film history. *The Lovers* (1958) treated sex scenes with a directness that can still be disconcerting; the film's release in America led to a case that ended in the Supreme Court. Malle's documentary on India provoked such outrage that the BBC was banned from the country for several years. Though his contemporaries were all fascinated by American cinema, Malle was the only French director of his generation who actually worked in the United States—and established himself well enough to be seriously considered as a candidate to make *Godfather III*.

Why, then, did Malle get so little credit? Part of the answer no doubt lies in the self-consciousness of the New Wave. The real subject of its signature films was filmmaking itself (literally so in the case of Truffaut's *Day for Night*). But unlike Godard, Truffaut and Chabrol, Malle never worked on *Cahiers du Cinéma*, the flagship magazine of the French New Wave. He was uninterested in film theory and dropped out of the Institut des Hautes Études Cinématographiques partly to get away from it. Malle had strong ideas about literature (especially Proust), philosophy (especially Nietzsche), the Third World (especially India), food (especially truffles), sports (especially cycling) and sex (of almost any kind), but he did not have any set of general principles about filmmaking. This unselfconscious approach to filmmaking made him appear philistine and middlebrow to many of his contemporaries. The fact that his films were neat and carefully polished hid their innovative qualities at a time when other filmmakers put such qualities in the shop window. In architectural terms, Malle was Edwin Lutyens to Godard's Richard Rogers.

Malle himself, like some of his admirers, was disappointed by the later part of his career. Like many brilliant young men, he found growing old difficult; Truffaut, who died in 1984, did not face the same problems, while Godard and Chabrol adjusted well to their roles as grand old men. Malle, once a man of enormous physical vigor, was ill for the last few years of his life. By the time he was 60, he felt unable to coach Juliette Binoche during sex scenes (a duty that he had taken very seriously with his previous leading ladies).

Malle's later films have sometimes been seen as renunciations of his earlier career. *Damage* (1992), for example, might be read as a critique of Malle's earlier films because it portrays sex as a destructive force, and because its treatment of incest makes it seem like an atonement for *Murmur of the Heart*. The sense of revisiting earlier films is even more pronounced in *Au Revoir les Enfants* (1987), which returns to 1944, the year in which *Lacombe Lucien* had been set. The film recounts an incident that happened in Malle's own school when two Jewish children who had been hidden there were captured by the Gestapo. Malle said this episode had overshadowed his whole life and helped to turn him into a rebel. Perhaps, in some ways, the film also marks the end of that rebellion. Unlike *Lacombe Lucien*, *Au Revoir les Enfants* is not a shocking subversion of received wisdom about the occupation. It was shot in deliberately restrained hues (Malle told the costume designer that he wanted no red except on the lipstick of the main character's mother). It is a worthy, almost pious, film in which there is a clear sense of right and wrong and, most surprising in view of Malle's earlier films, the figure most identified with right is a priest and teacher.

However, Billard's biography shows that it is too simple to interpret *Au Revoir les Enfants* and *Damage* just as works of repentance or renunciation. Unlike so many French intellectuals of his generation, Malle could not renounce his youth, because he had never espoused an explicit political or artistic program. His films always hinted at the possibility of multiple interpretations. *The Lovers* ends just after the heroine has experienced a moment of doubt about the new life on which she has entered; *Murmur of the Heart* presents a boy having sex with his mother as a lighthearted comedy with a happy ending, but Malle's first draft of the script suggested a more conventionally tragic, and much less shocking, ending in which the boy commits suicide.

When Philip French asked Malle what united his films, Malle said simply, "Me." More than the works of those who are conventionally identified as "auteurs," Malle's films are linked by his own tastes, instincts and emotions rather than by a coherent set of ideas. A biography of Malle probably sheds more light on his films than any number of works rooted in film theory. It will also make readers keen to return to the films themselves. ■

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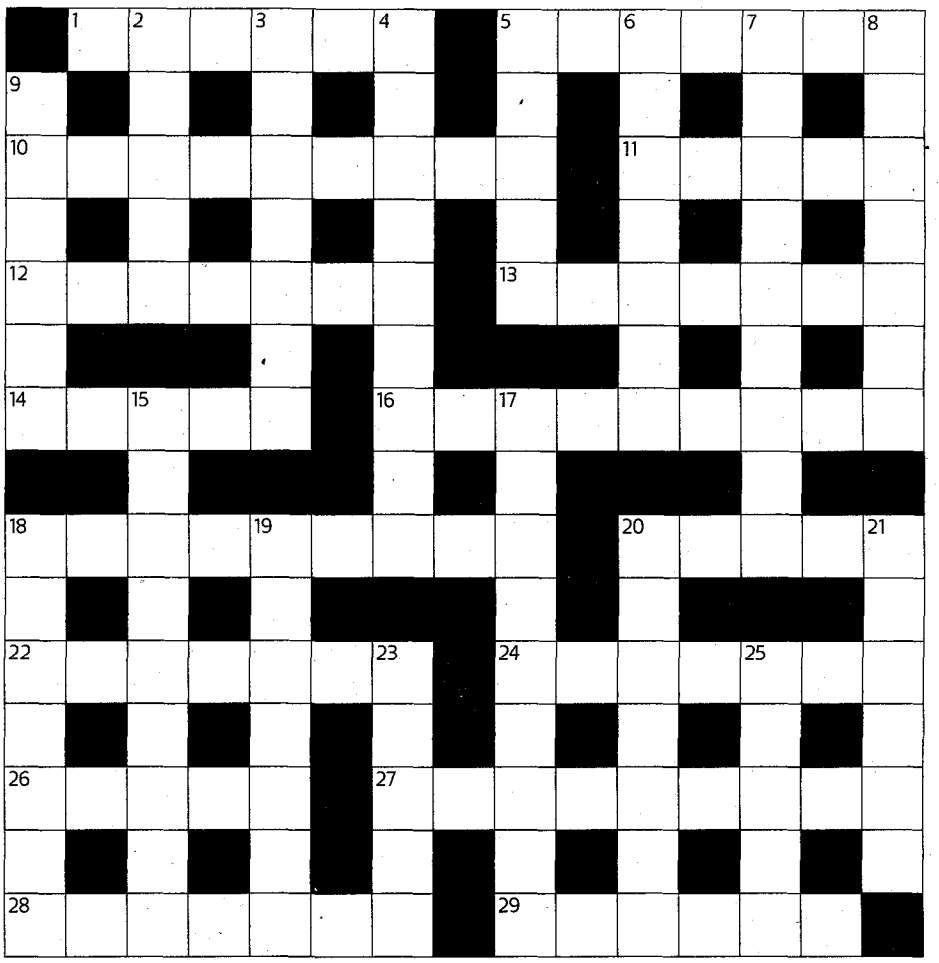

ACROSS

1 and **5** Possibly untied, where the sun sets as well as often being paired with 28-29. (6,2,5)

10 A marine type associated with leave-taking at the dance. (6,3)

11 For a special purpose, incorrectly had the officer in charge make it. (2,3)

12 What one does on the board when it doesn't totter, being located in E Street. (7)

13 The opus featuring General Castro and ten more. (7)

14 Represented by Good Hope, if not the kind you wear, unless you're Superman! (5)

16 What one does, getting off his high horse, according to the way Tim sounds. (9)

18 At least it should make Cora happy to get something doubtful added. (9)

20 Because of this, it takes a couple of people to make music together with nothing on. (3,2)

22 Evidently the performance was canceled because of the one associated with self-display. (7)

24 The part of London where the rough sea has to take care of things. (4,3)

26 Proving Tom is sort of wet! (5)

27 Perhaps meet with one who makes a false note around the hat business. (9)

28 and **29** It shows what happens when we don't stay 1 across. (7,2,4)

DOWN

2 The sort of word that is used on occasion—with a certain point, only a single time. (5)

3 One who killed the Minotaur puts the things I'm talking about on you and me. (7)

4 If you got this down instead, you'd get bawled out and properly decked! (7,2)

5 Kaspar was a physiologist, like a wild animal with some indication of loudness. (5)

6 Useful when you forget the name, as well as in mediocre surroundings. (2-3-2)

7 Sort of has Mr. Chaney in bed, sort of—which is fair, very fair! (3,6)

8 and **21** Might involve such things as "take one aspirin, and see me in the morning!" (7,6)

9 Though a good pilot has the shakes, yet proves "full of vinegar" as they say! (6)

15 In favor of being put in a Russian town with well-known gates, according to the composer. (9)

17 His stand in the field is particularly lifeless, with the result of the operation having a point to brag about. (9)

18 Possibly amused about a point which is taken for granted. (7)

19 However the hen could have done it, as well as the cockerel when he grew up. (7)

20 The so-called female side I would shortly bring up with the rest of the work force. (7)

21 See 8

23 What one did in the spirit of '76, if getting up to be given food. (5)

25 The French rise up about your old-fashioned way to be used if you don't like what sounds like Knox. (5)

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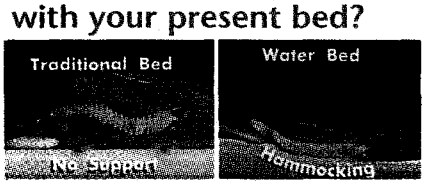

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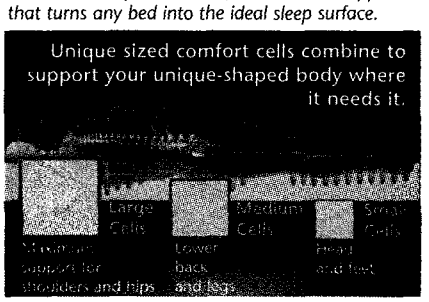
Unique sized comfort cells combine to support your unique-shaped body where it needs it.
Large Cells
Medium Cells
Small Cells
Lower back and legs
Head and feet

FREE heavyweight mattress pad included. Included with the Memory Foam Ultra mattress topper is a fitted mattress pad. It's heavyweight and quilted, and made of 200-count 100% cotton with a 15-inch deep stretchable skirt to fit a mattress up to 21 inches thick. The size of the mattress pad is determined by the size mattress topper you order.

Try it for yourself today! The Memory Foam Ultra mattress topper can change the way you sleep. Promote proper spine positioning, while enjoying relief from insomnia and back pain with this full-body support. It comes with a 5-year manufacturer's limited warranty and TechnoScout's exclusive in-home trial. If you are not completely satisfied, simply return it within 30 days for the full purchase price, less shipping and handling.

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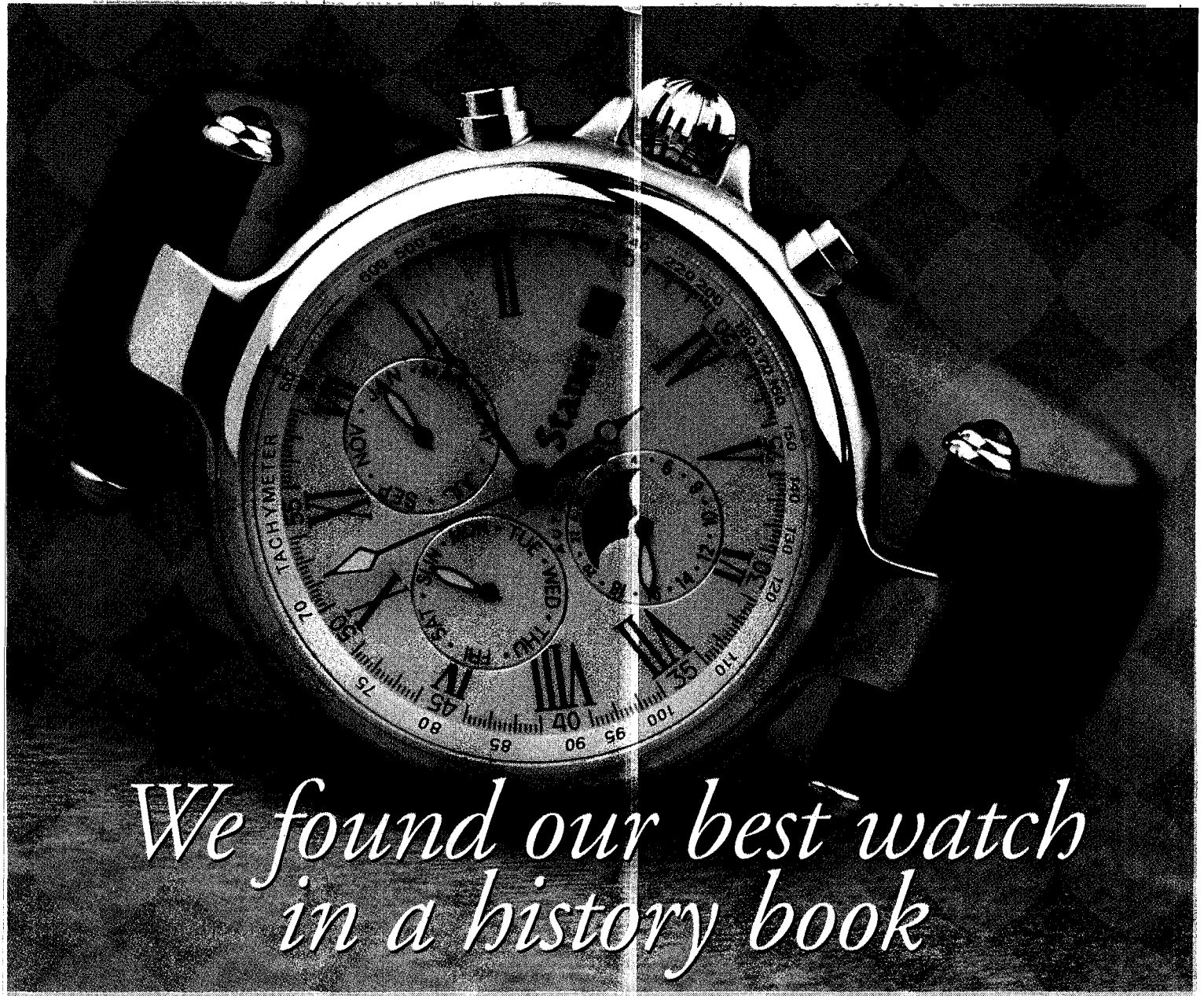

We found our best watch in a history book

In 1922, a small watchmaker in Switzerland patented the first automatic watch to display the day, month and date. Only 7 of these magnificent timepieces were ever made and this watch was almost lost to history. Today, they are so rare that one original chronograph watch would probably fetch more than $300,000 at auction.

These watches were among the most stylish of the roaring 20's. And yet no one has attempted to remake this 1922 classic until now. The Stauer watch design that you see here has been painstakingly recreated from the original functions to please even the most discerning owner. The owner of this classic chronograph watch is sure to look distinguished and set apart from the crowd. From the sweeping second hand to the Roman numerals on the unique ivory-colored face, every detail has been carefully reproduced. This Stauer reissue is a limited series, allowing you to wear a watch far more exclusive than many Rolex, Movado, TAG Heuer or Breitling watches.

The watch has a 21-jewel mechanical movement, the kind desired by fine watch collectors. We have updated this movement with kinetic power thus the watch never needs to be manually wound. The watch comes in a beautiful case and comes with both interchangeable black and brown leather bands.

This is a chance to claim a piece of watchmaking history in an elegant design that is still priced to wear every day. This offer is being made directly to you so you can add this watch to your collection at a very affordable price. The watch comes with a 30-day no questions asked money-back guarantee. If you're not completely satisfied, simply return it for a full refund of the purchase price.

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